

1856

# The Young Man's Friend (Part One)

Daniel C. Eddy

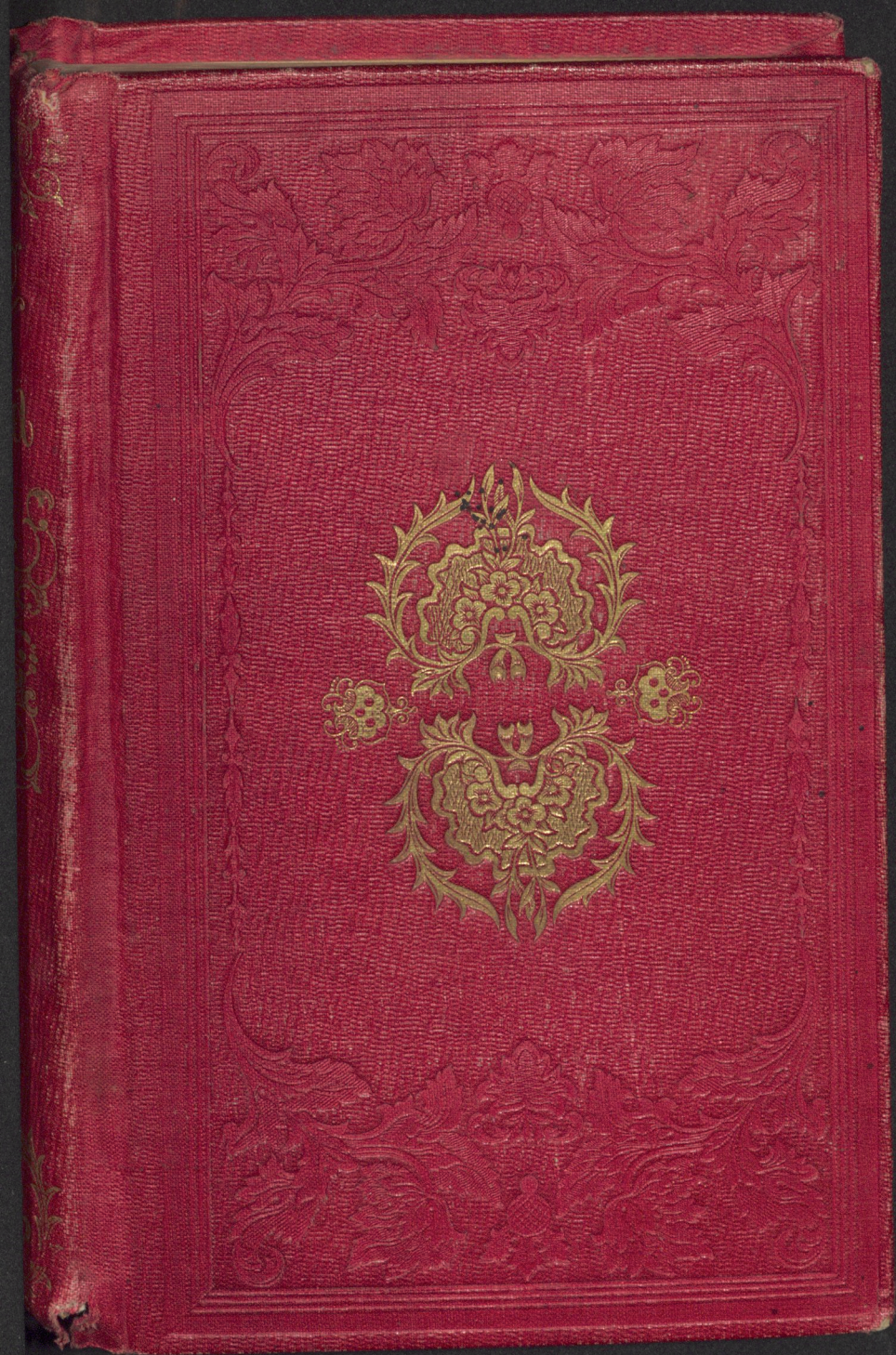
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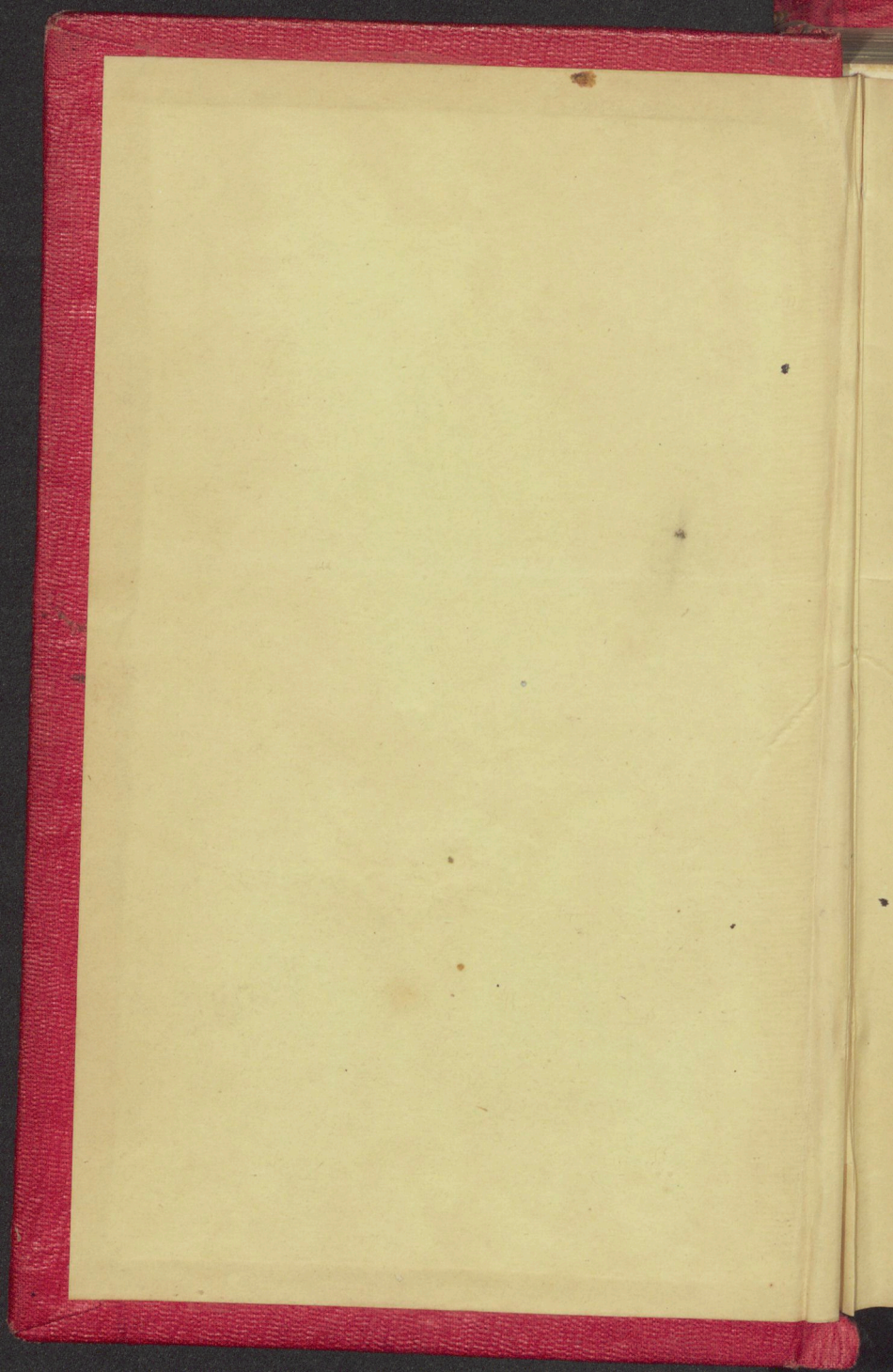
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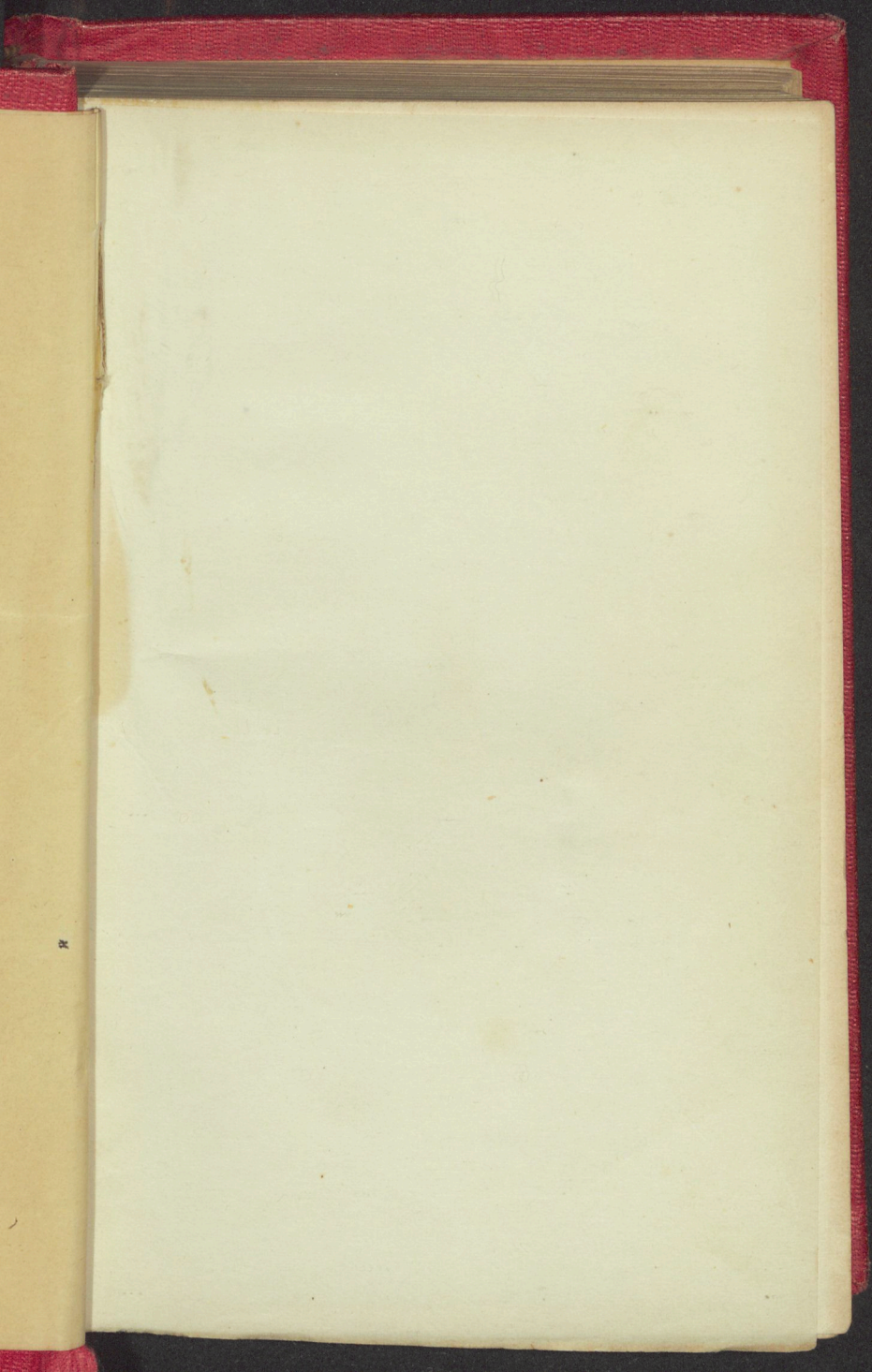






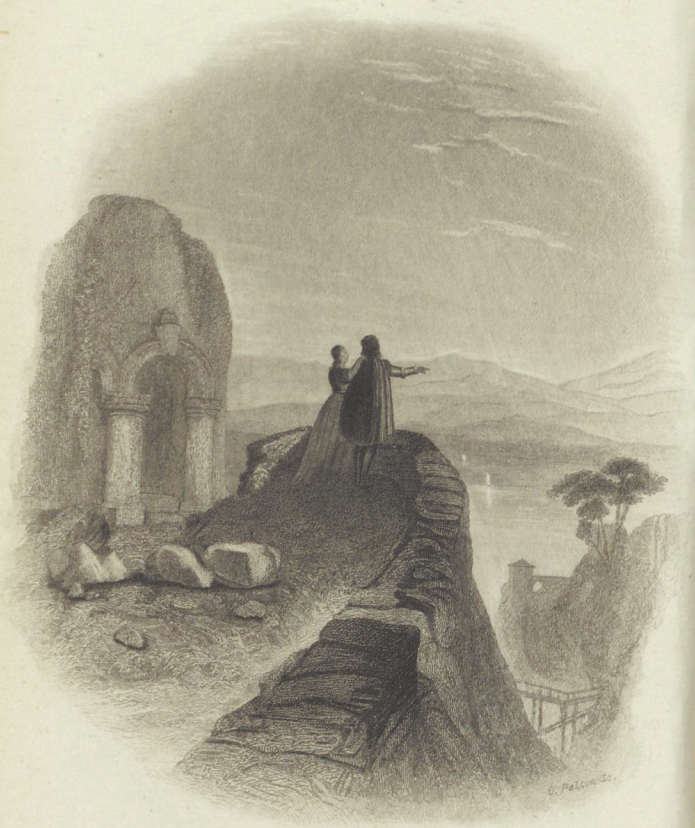
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OUR HOME IS BEYOND THE TIDE

THE  
YOUNG MAN'S FRIEND;

CONTAINING

EXHORTATIONS FOR THE ERRING; COUNSEL FOR THE TEMPTED  
ENCOURAGEMENT FOR THE DESPONDING;  
HOPE FOR THE FALLEN.

BY DANIEL C. EDDY.

---

I have written unto you young men, because ye are young — John

---

BOSTON:  
WENTWORTH & CO.,  
83 WASHINGTON STREET  
1856.





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I have written unto you young men, because ye are strong. — *John.*

---

BOSTON:  
WENTWORTH & CO.,  
86 WASHINGTON STREET.  
1856.



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## P R E F A C E.

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THIS volume is given to the public, by the advice of some of the author's most judicious friends, who cherish the hope that it may be the means of shielding the young from crime and leading them to the practice of virtue and the pursuit of holiness.

The lectures were originally delivered to a large congregation of young men, and it has been thought best, that the direct, personal appeal of the pulpit should be retained, and such alterations only, made, as would adapt them to general circulation.

The object of the book is, to impress upon the minds of young men, such lessons of virtue as will render them useful and successful in life, and by presenting the old Puritan view of sinful pleasures, lead the reader to cultivate the old Puritan integrity.

While innocent amusements have been encouraged, dangerous amusements have been condemned, and



#### PREFACE.

the mind directed to healthy, reasonable sources of recreation, which have been furnished so amply by nature and by God — amusements which embrace utility with recreation, and pleasure with profit.

An effort has been made to blend instruction with exhortation — encouragement with warning, and by holding up, side by side, the woes of vice and the rewards of virtue, lead the young to hate the one, and love the other.

The earnest wish, and fervent prayer of the author is, that the work may *do good*, and prove a source of profit to the young men into whose hands it may chance to fall.

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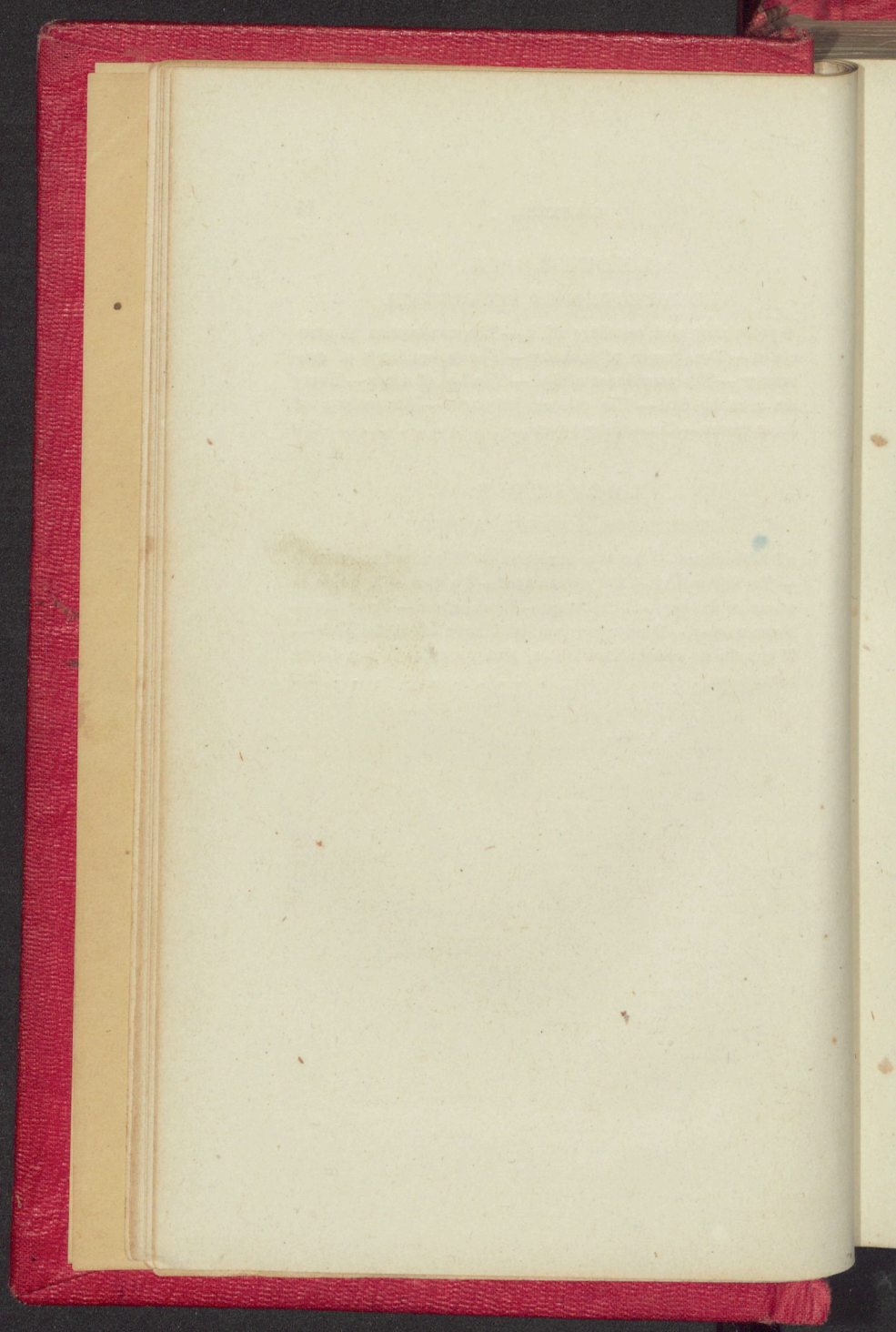
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THE  
YOUNG MAN'S FRIEND.

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LECTURE I.

THE ELEMENTS OF A MANLY COURSE.

SHOW THYSELF A MAN.—1 *Kings* 2: 2.

THIS was a part of the royal David's dying charge to Solomon his son. The monarch minstrel was about to be gathered to his fathers, the door of the sepulchre was open for him, and his grave clothes were ready. The crown he had already placed upon the head of his youngest son, and as he stood with one foot in the grave, and one upon the crumbling shores of time, he enjoined with all a father's solicitude, the performance of those duties and the observance of those rules, which were well calculated to render his government perpetual, and his name illustrious. He exhorted him, not to show himself a



warrior merely—not a statesman merely—not a monarch merely, but a MAN—possessing the generous impulses of a man, and displaying a manly nature in all his intercourse with men. So Solomon understood him, and his government became the admiration of the world, his fame spread through all nations, and the proudest monarchs of the earth came to behold his glory, and the magnificence of his kingdom. While others reigned as kings, and ruled as tyrants, he governed as a man, having common sympathies with those above whom he had been elevated by birth and blood.

In our times, there are various and contradictory opinions cherished, in regard to what constitutes a *manly course*. It is not every one that wears a human form that can claim to be a man, in the full sense of that term, though he may prove his connection with the human race. Many live and move among us who are destitute of the chief elements of a manly character. They suppose themselves men indeed—they regard their own course as honorable and worthy of imitation. The gambler has his code of honor; the duellist has his code of honor; the soldier red in blood has his code of honor. Napoleon was an honorable man in his way, and the world ascribed to him many great and noble qualities. He fought well, and conquered well. His banner waved in triumph over many a bloody field; carnage, and famine, and

death attended his steps, and like the genius of evil he stalked abroad. He was, doubtless, a splendid general and a brilliant emperor; but the child who wandered over the field after his most triumphant charge, and wet with water the lips of the dying soldier there, was far more exalted in the scale of being, than was the plumed and epauletted chieftain.

Nelson was a skilful officer, and died as the world says, "in all his glory." His banner was his shroud; the roar of cannon was his dirge, and the shout of victory was his requiem. In the history of naval heroes, his name stands foremost, and they who love the navy, have learned to honor him. But the poor sailor, who a few months since in yonder distant city, braved the fire, and at the risk of his own life saved a mother's only child, gained a truer glory than ever shone around the victories of the distinguished admiral.

How false — how unjust the estimate which the world places upon the actions of men. He who dies upon the battle field — who rushes to carnage and to strife — whose hands are dripping with human gore, is a man of honor. Parliaments and senates return him thanks, and whole nations unite in erecting a monument over the spot where sleeps his corpse. But he whose task it is, to dry up the stream of blood, — to mitigate the anguish of earth, — to lift man up, and make him what God designed him to be, dies



without a tongue to speak his eulogy, or a monument to mark his fall. That only is truly honorable which does good to the body or the soul of man — which contributes to human happiness, or promotes the glory of God. He shows himself a man, and he only, who sacrifices his own interests that he may benefit others — who lives unknown to fame that he may bind up some broken heart — who lays his own honor and happiness, and even life itself, upon the altar of a common humanity.

My reader, would you show yourself a man, go not to yonder tented field, where death hovers, and the vulture feasts himself upon human victims! Go not where men are carving monuments of marble to perpetuate names which will not live in one grateful memory! Go not to the dwellings of the rich! Go not to the palaces of kings! Go not to the halls of merriment and pleasure! Go to the widow and relieve her woe: Go to the orphan and speak words of comfort: Go to the lost and save him: Go to the fallen and raise him up: Go to the wanderer and bring him back to virtue: Go to the sinner and whisper in his ears words of salvation and eternal life.

The true object of life has scarcely begun to be understood. In past ages men have been attracted by the glitter and show of conquest, and worldly predominance. They have pursued the phantom, while the real and the substantial have been sacrificed.

They have aimed at the accomplishment of objects, which have resulted in no good to the world. They have built up systems of monstrous wrong. They have strengthened the dominion of human cruelty and labored more to crush the race than to lift it up. SELF has been the common centre, and around it the universe has been made to revolve like systems around their suns. What, then, are the elements of true manliness?

*Wealth is not one.* In a multitude of cases the possessor of the largest fortune, and the widest territory, has been found to have views and feelings not at all in proportion to the magnitude of his fortune. There is a contingency about wealth which has nothing to do with moral or intellectual character. It seems to be rained upon the human family by a capricious goddess, who distributes her favors according to rules known only to herself. At one time a monarch is her favorite, and his throne she studs with jewels, and fills his crown with richest diamonds. At his feet she spreads out broad fields—well cultivated vineyards—beautiful temples and shining towers, and as his admiring eye gazes over the scene, she whispers in his ear,—“These are thine!” At another time she fixes her eye upon a beggar boy, as he asks for food from house to house, repulsed everywhere. His hand she takes, and leads him up, as if by magic through the various grades of society until she establishes him



in a palace, and fills his coffers with the shining gold. Fair cheeked young men have sought to win her smile, but sought in vain, while she has turned from them to bestow her gifts upon some unsightly being, on whom God's curse seems to have fallen. The intelligent — the virtuous — the brave — the wise, have knelt at her altar, and breathed their supplications, but she has spurned them away and beckoned with friendly hand, to sordid ignorance and vice. Hence we find that wealth gives us no clue to character — furnishes us with no criterion by which we may measure the soul, and judge of the dimensions of the man himself.

*Birth and blood are not elements of true manliness.* Royal veins are often found to flow with plebeian streams, and crime and duplicity as often disgrace the palace of the monarch, as the hovel of the slave. Cæsar was a monarch. Blood of which after ages loved to boast, flowed through his princely temples. A crown was on his brow — the imperial crown. At the foot of his throne proud nations nestled, and o'er all the earth his banner waved; but was Cæsar a man? had he a manly character? was his bosom thrilled by manly emotions? No. Nero's heart swelled with the blood of emperors. Rome acknowledged him as her sovereign; but was he a man? No. Nero and Cæsar were both monarchs, but they were not men in the noblest sense. No living link con-



nected them with the great heart of humanity. They were on earth — they ate and drank and slept like other men — they wore the human form, but aside from this, they moved like demons through the earth, smiting its flowers and withering its verdure. When they descended from the living to the dead, a mighty incubus was removed from the crushed form of humanity, and upon their graves she stood and uttered thanksgiving. On the other hand, we have seen beggars and slaves in whose veins not a single drop of princely blood was flowing, come forth from their low abodes to startle the world with the brilliancy of their lives, wake up the race to angelic deeds and produce a wonderful change throughout all the ranks of men, and all grades of human society. Such was Luther. He was no prince. He bore no tokens of royalty. He came clad in no habiliments of state and majesty. From a cloistered cell he came — a shaven monk. In his hand no sceptre — on his head no crown. But he had a human heart within him, and it gushed out for human woe. Such was Wilberforce and Howard and Carey and a host of others, who have stood for right, and breasted the world's dark tide for the good of men.

*Intellect does not make the man.* I admit the power of intellect. I acknowledge its superiority over wealth, physical power, and brute force; but a mere intellectualist is not a man. True, intellect is one of



the elements which enter into the composition of man, as we usually apply that term; but in the better sense in which I use the word, *the possession* of intellect only, gives proof that one is fitted to be a man, and *the use* of that intellect shows to what extent he *is* a man. Enter any department of literature and science, and you will find men of vast power and might. Among the poets, you behold Byron standing in the first rank. The grasp of thought—the clear conception—the elevated diction—the elegant language, are seen at a single glance. As an intellectualist, he stands almost beyond the power of criticism, and that is a bold man who dares hurl a shaft at the literary merits of his productions. But what is the tendency of the works of Byron? Will his writings do good or evil? I hesitate not to say, as other men have said before me, that they tend to corruption,—that they are calculated to sink the feelings of the reader,—lower the standard of his virtues,—corrupt his taste and deprave his heart. Among historians, stands conspicuously the name of Gibbon. And what was he? From every quarter of the globe, I hear the reply, “He was one of the world’s most distinguished writers.” His “Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,” will continue to be read with interest so long as the world stands—his name will be remembered as long as time endures. But Gibbon was a sceptic as well as a historian. His works are full of artful attacks up-



on the religion of the cross. Scepticism is interwoven with all that he has written, and to the last age will be handed down with his grand history, his attempts to undermine the Bible, and overthrow the Christian faith. While literature will point to him as one of its most distinguished ornaments, Christianity will pronounce the name of Edward Gibbon with tears of pity. Poetry and history are not the only departments which furnish such instances. On every page of the book of fame, are found the names of men endowed by God with giant minds — men of dazzling intellect, who have used their powers for the perversion of truth and the destruction of the kingdom of Christ. Look at Bulwer and Alexander Dumas! what powers of mind! what vast capacity for labor! what unwearied perseverance in catering to the public taste; and all perverted — all used to debase man, and sink him to a level with the brutes. Towering intellect, when used for unholy purposes — when made a minister of vice, is a curse, not only to its possessor but to all who come within the circle of its fatal influence: and better would it be for the world to be without these splendid intellects than to have them devoted to the service of Satan.

In enforcing the exhortation of David to his son, upon your minds my readers, I wish to present three ways in which each one may show himself a man in the highest meaning of that term, and which if obser-



ved will promote happiness in this life and lead to glory in the life to come. As I make these remarks, I remember that I am a young man myself—that a mutual sympathy must exist between myself and the younger portion of my congregation—that we are sailing over life together, and hence have common interests, common hopes, and common dangers. I will urge you then to show yourself a man,

I. BY A MANLY EFFORT FOR THE PROMOTION OF VIRTUE. Society cannot exist without virtue. It is impossible for a vicious and depraved community to be prosperous and happy. God has otherwise ordained. He has made virtue the basis of happiness, and vice the cause of sorrow. With communities, as well as with individuals, the sentiment of Scripture proves true, "The way of the transgressor is hard." Hence, if we look back over the history of the past, we find nations and communities prosperous and happy, just in proportion to the public and private virtues of the people. We find the ancient republics while devoted to virtue, rising in opulence and increasing in honor and happiness. We behold them increasing their influence; spreading their conquests, and extending their authority. But in process of time those republics became corrupt; the virtue of the people died out, the temples were consecrated to crime, and the altars stained with blood. As vice increased, the bright dream of happiness vanished before its dark



and dreadful form, and one by one those nations, once the admiration of the world, have fallen into ruin. Where are they now? Their blackened pillars—their crumbling temples—their ruined honor, their fallen greatness, alone remain as warning beacons to all coming time. The principle remains unchanged. Virtue is now the basis of happiness and prosperity, and the nation which discards it, will speedily sink into ruin. France has been tampering with it for years, and the result has been fearful. Revolution after revolution has occurred—one wave of blood after another has rolled through the guilty streets of Paris, and the people from one end of the land to the other, have been clothed in mourning. In our own land,—in all our cities,—a warfare between virtue and vice is in continual progress. The discordant elements of one, and the pure principles of the other, are at work, striving for universal conquest. The gigantic form of evil is stalking abroad, and sin of all grades is fearfully prevalent. Look around, and you will behold intemperance fondly cherished. You will see the drunkard reeling and staggering to his fall. You will see standing at the bar, all characters and conditions in life, from the young man who seems abashed amid the gay throng, and takes his first glass with trembling and fear, to the aged drunkard from whom all shame and contrition have fled away. Go forth and you will see them reeling out to the



light of day, the son, the brother, the father, and sometimes the wife and mother. Follow them to their abodes, and you will behold their homes divested of all that is attractive, and converted into places of misery. Intemperance is not alone. By its side, marching to this conquest over man, is immorality of every sort, and depravity of every description. The picture which Pollock drew of our world as it will be at the consummation, is too fearfully true at the present time :

“Satan raged loose, Sin had her will, and Death  
 Enough. Blood trod upon the heels of Blood;  
 Revenge in desperate mood, at midnight met  
 Revenge. War brayed to War, Deceit deceived  
 Deceit. Lie cheated Lie, and Treachery,  
 Mined under Treachery; and Perjury  
 Swore back on Perjury; and Blasphemy  
 Arose with hideous Blasphemy, and curse  
 Loud answering curse; and drunkard stumbling fell  
 O'er drunkard fallen; and husband, husband met  
 Returning from each other's bed defiled:  
 Thief stole from thief; and robber on the way  
 Knocked robber down; and Lewdness, Violence  
 And Hate met Lewdness, Violence, and Hate.”

The mission of the young man in this age, is, to meet these evils which have crept in upon society, and with all his influence arrest if possible the tide of sin which is sweeping over the world. Vice has its known, open, avowed supporters. Those who are engaged in vicious employments — whose craft consists

in making men miserable, and preparing their souls for perdition, are using all their endeavors to spread corruption. In some cases the public press and the pulpit, have so far forgotten the dignity connected with them, as to become defenders of crime, and have given their sanction to the progress of the fearful scourge.

Now I cherish the opinion, and in it I think you will concur, that the young men of our country have never taken that position in relation to vice, which it is their sacred duty to occupy. Thus far they have stood aloof, as a body, from the great contest, and have left their grey-haired sires to fight alone. They have felt that it did not belong to them to enter the foremost rank, and stand out in defence of the great principles of right. In this I contend that young men have mistaken their true position. There is no class, to whom a louder call is given by God and humanity, to enter the field as the avowed defenders of virtue and truth. There is no class of persons capable of accomplishing more, and effecting the object with more ease and readiness than are they. Should the young men of our cities in one firm united band set their faces against vice of every description, the effect would be instant and irresistible. Half the dram-shops would be closed, half the gambling-saloons would be deserted, crape would hang upon the door of the theatre, and the grinding of the music in the hall of revelry would become low. And



I ask if such a prospect has nothing attractive to this crowd of young men? Is not the sight of reformed — regenerated drunkards — redeemed gamblers, libertines, and Sabbath-breakers, one worthy of our care and efforts? Is there no music in the song of the mother over her reformed son? Is there no charm in the willing step of the prodigal, as he returns to the home of his youth, and to the bosom of his sire? Is there no beauty to the form of Virtue as she stands with her foot upon the neck of prostrate Vice?

The question will arise in some minds, What can I do? Were I in the ministry, or did I stand at the head of one of the learned professions, the attempt might be successful. Let such a young man look at the instances in which young men, and old men, have accomplished great results under the most discouraging circumstances. Let him turn his eye to Luther as from his cell he came, and hurled his shafts at Rome. Let him behold Columbus as he chartered his vessel, and hired his crew, and sailed forth, jeered and scorned, to discover a new world. Let him contemplate the numberless cases of like character which adorn the history of the world, and learn from them, that a young man can do anything that is right.

II. BY A MANLY INTEREST IN THE ELEVATION OF THE RACE. We sustain certain relations to the whole human family. We are children of one common parent. We are the heirs of one common inheritance.



Go to the wildest spot on earth, and find the blackest character which exists within the limits of the race, and you find in that dark character, a relative — *a brother*. Ethiopia's son as he lifts his hands to God — the wild Karen as he rushes from his dark jungle, ready for blood — the child of Erin, as he comes in rags and poverty to our shores, are all our brethren. We cannot divest ourselves of this relationship if we would. God has formed it for us, and whether we are willing to acknowledge the fact or not, the race is one wide and indissoluble fraternity. The black faced negro — the hunted Indian and the proudest child of civilization, are of one blood. Hence we find that God has given us a natural sympathy one with another. He has created us with a feeling of relationship, and given us a disposition to assist the fallen, and relieve the wants of the needy. He has designed that we should be mutual helpers and assistants, and has placed us in a position of mutual dependence, so that our relations may ever be recognised.

It is when man is displaying himself for the good of others that he seems most Godlike, and if there is a time when he appears to have but little of the influence of depravity in his heart, it is, when ministering like an angel of mercy to the wants and woes of life. Now in the providence of God it has occurred, that the young men of America are more favorably situated, than are the young men of any other por-



tion of the earth. Thanks to God and the Puritans, we occupy a spot on which intelligence, morality, and religion have shed their mildest beams, and exerted their most happy influences. Consequently we can look abroad and behold everywhere the objects of pity and commiseration. Ignorance, slavery, heathenish degradation, arrest the attention everywhere, and pathetic appeals from every quarter are made to the young men of our own favored section of the earth. Nor have we a right to deny these claims and resist these appeals. The object for which we live, is not to secure our own gratification, and minister to our own increasing desires. The good of others should be one of the most prominent objects of our lives — an object never to be forgotten. He who has never felt his bosom thrill with pity at the recital of scenes which are transpiring upon the earth, he who has not gazed with feelings of deep commiseration upon the millions who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, and who has never made an effort to send them the means of civilization, and the religion of the cross, is a stranger to the emotions which will crowd upon the mind of every man, who understands his relations to his fellow-creatures, and who is willing to acknowledge them.

Whatever may be our views of Christianity, whatever may be our opinion of experimental piety, we cannot but admit our obligation to send the Bible to all climes.



Thus far the influence of Christianity upon the nations of the earth has been inconceivably great. It has swept away system after system of philosophy, politics, and religion. It has remodeled the whole framework of human society — upturned its very foundations, and laid at the basis of all earthly intercourse, principles new and hitherto unknown. Before Christianity, the Jews had a ritual of blood, and the heathen a ritual of darkness. Christ sealed up the fountain of one, and the exploded dogmas of past ages gave place to the sublime faith of the Son of God. And such ever will be the influence of the gospel wherever it is propagated. It will dissipate darkness — dispel the gloom of mind — break the fetters of the slave, and make virtuous and happy society.

Such being the nature of Christianity, it is the duty of young men to send it to the heathen, whether they have themselves embraced it, or not. Whatever may be our opinion of its influence upon the soul of man, all agree that it embraces the only system of morality which can render the world happy, and the governments of the earth glorious. Consequently it is our duty, to send to heathen nations the Bible, that it may civilize and make them moral, and he who casts his influence against the missionary enterprise, casts it not only against the salvation of the souls of the heathen, but against the progress of civilization, and hence, is an enemy of his race, and forfeits his



claim to the name of man. Our relations to others are not understood as they ought to be. The mass of young men seem to feel that they are under no obligation to aid in the elevation of the race. But is it so? God and humanity give a negative reply. The young have no right to rest from toil, until want is driven from the borders of our own country, until virtue is respected, and vice hated, until labor receives its due reward, until honest men are respected whatever may be their pecuniary circumstances, until general intelligence shall be characteristic of the people. They have no right to rest from toil, until every one of the three million slaves who groan upon our southern soil are free; until war, and the spirit of war are eradicated from the breast of man; until bloodshed and cruel oppression are done away. They have no right to cease from toil, until the thrones of tyrants are demolished; until aristocracies of blood, birth, and wealth are buried in one common grave. They have no right to rest until over all the earth the gospel has been preached and Christianity embraced — until

‘ The voice of singing,  
Flows joyfully along :  
And hill and valley ringing  
With one triumphant song,  
Proclaim the contest ended,  
And Him who once was slain,  
Again to earth descended  
In righteousness to reign.”



III. BY A MANLY SUBMISSION TO THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD. There is a notion widely spread, that religion is an unmanly thing, that embracing it, betrays a womanly weakness, that it is the product of superstitious fear, or of a fanatical imagination. Thousands who respect Christianity on account of its triumphs, who admire the Bible on account of the purity and sublimity of its doctrines, would lose the right hand, rather than be suspected of being tinctured with what are deemed the follies of Christians. Especially young men, shrink from having it known that they have any desire to become savingly interested in the cross of Christ. On this rock thousands have shipwrecked salvation and their souls. Convinced of sin, of the need of a Saviour, they have hushed the voice of the Spirit — crushed the aspirations of the better nature, lest the world should place on them the brand of fanaticism; and there are some present who would become submissive to the Divine will, and embrace humble piety, did they not deem the act childish and unfashionable. But how mistaken are such! Pure religion instead of being childish, unmanly and weak, is honorable in the highest degree. God is our moral governor, and submission is honorable. God is our father, and obedience is honorable. God is our benefactor, and gratitude is honorable. You have earthly parents who have watched over your advancing years, who



have protected you from childhood, and would shame tinge your cheek were it told that you revered and honored and obeyed those parents? No: and should a blush be seen, when God the Eternal Father is obeyed and worshipped? Religion consists in doing right, and is doing right, manly or unmanly? Religion is gratitude to a kind friend and benevolent benefactor, and is gratitude under such circumstances manly or unmanly? The angels are engaged night and day in the service of God—the highest intelligences of Heaven, bow before the dazzling throne with ceaseless songs, and tell me, is such service manly or unmanly, honorable or dishonorable? Instead of being a dishonorable work, the service of God is the highest and noblest which can engage the attention of angels or men; while sin is unmanly, weak, cowardly, debasing, and devilish. Every man who is converted and becomes a child of God has conferred upon him immortal glory, while every sinner who lives on in sin is covering himself with everlasting shame and disgrace. I am not alone in this view of the subject. Some of the mightiest minds have been found among those who have been believers in experimental piety, and who have loved to attest by many works of love, their attachment to the religion of the cross. Men from all professions—from all parties and all countries—from all ranks in life, and degrees of mental culture, have been found,



who were not ashamed of Christ, but who deemed his religion manly and honorable. Sir Matthew Hale, one of the most distinguished Judges which England has ever had, *was a Christian*. Joseph Addison, one of the most beautiful writers of Europe, and who has added much to the literature of his native land, *was a Christian*. Cowper, Pollok, Milton, and other great poets of the world, *were Christians*. Fenelon, Mackintosh, Paley, Tillotson, Melancthon, *were Christians*. Sir Isaac Newton, one of the greatest philosophers who ever lived, and a host of others whose names I have no time to mention, *were Christians*.

Of our own countrymen some of the most illustrious have been among the professors of the faith of the cross, deeming it no reproach. The great leader of our tribes, Washington, was not only a godly man, but everywhere let it be known. The whole army, the officers and private members of the regiments, knew that he was a man of humble piety and prayer. Several of the framers of the declaration of independence were disciples of Christ, known and avowed. Several of our most able judges are men of like precious faith, and though of different creeds and sects, unite in their hearty attachment to vital godliness. The "old man eloquent," whose form we laid away as it were but yesterday, and whom the nation loveth to honor, was a man of piety. Amid the arduous duties which devolved upon him, he found time to commune with



God, and perform those duties which some of our young men deem so childish and frivolous, but which the venerable ex-President loved to perform, even to his dying moment. These cases I select from a multitude of others which I only need time to produce, as witnesses of the opinion, which these men of strong minds and untarnished honor, have cherished in regard to the Christian faith.

And if it was not dishonorable to them, will it be so to us? If they were called disciples, and the charge brought no blush to the cheek, shall we be ashamed of God our Father—of Christ our Saviour?

“Ashamed of Jesus, sooner far,  
Let evening blush to own a star.”

I have done. The time allotted for a single lecture has already expired, and what effect has been produced? Have I aroused one manly feeling, have I awakened one generous emotion, have I kindled up in one mind a desire to do good, or love God? Let thy heart be strong, young man, for high and holy deeds, and be determined to be something more than a slave, who toils by day, and lies down to sleep at night, forgetful of his kin, his country, and his God.

✕ “Count life by virtues—these will last  
When life's lame-footed race is o'er;  
And these, when earthly joys are past,  
Shall cheer us on a brighter shore.” ✕



## LECTURE II.

YOUTH; ITS ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES.

MEDITATE UPON THESE THINGS; GIVE THYSELF WHOLLY TO THEM; THAT THY PROFITING MAY APPEAR TO ALL.—1 *Timothy* 4: 15.

THIS was part of an address delivered to a young man who was about to embark upon the sea of life, without experience and exposed to all the temptations by which the period of youth is surrounded. He had chosen a high and sacred calling. He had entered the Christian ministry, and had devoted himself to the work of reforming his fellowmen. Though commissioned by God and ordained by inspired men, he was yet to a considerable extent, to be the framer of his own course. His success as a man and as a minister, depended in a certain sense, upon the plan which he should pursue and the course of action which he should adopt. To guide him through the period of his inexperience, the apostle Paul directed to him the two epistles which bear his name. In these epistles cer-



tain sentiments are advanced, and certain principles of action prescribed, and the injunction is given, that he should meditate upon them, give them his serious consideration for the obvious reason, that his profiting might appear in his intercourse with men.

Those of us who are young are starting upon the voyage of life, more or less elated with hopes and prospects of success. With us, the period of childhood has passed away, and with it, the period of dependence upon parental oversight. Like a vessel which has left its moorings in the harbor, and stretched its canvas for a returnless voyage, and floated out upon the heaving bosom of the great ocean, so each young man has left the home of his childhood, the roof which sheltered him in infancy, and the scenes which clustered around him there, and gone forth to grapple with the stern realities of mature life. He may have kind parents and prudent friends, but they follow him not, and to a certain extent he is alone upon the world's wide waste. This is felt by every young person, as he goes forth into life to seek his own fortune, and carve out his own destiny. He enters his profession, locates himself in business, and feels that the great world is before him. In most cases high hopes are cherished. A fortune dazzles the eyes of the youthful aspirant, and he rushes on to secure it, without one single thought of failure. Most young men when they enter the active scenes



of life appear to have made provision for nothing but complete and triumphant success. Whatever may be the object of pursuit, they seem to have it in their grasp, and in a multitude of cases meet nothing but misfortune and disappointment. You have seen the noble vessel leaving some one of our harbors on the coast, on a beautiful morning in summer, with all sails spread, with every banner and pennant flying, with joy on every countenance and high hope beating in every heart. You have watched her progress as she walked through "the waters like a thing of life," and faded from your view upon the distant ocean. You have admired her majestic and imposing form, and wished yourself upon her deck, about to traverse with her, the fathomless deep. You have stood there long after she has disappeared from view, and have turned from the spot without dreaming that the noble vessel would become a wreck ere midnight. But follow her out to sea, and you will soon see dark clouds rolling over the sun — far away in the distance the hoarse thunder will mutter — the moaning sea will present a fearful aspect, and utter from her sepulchral lips ominous threatenings. Soon the storm will come. Peal after peal of thunder — flash after flash of lightning adds terror to the scene. The ship which you saw a few hours before, moving so majestically from the harbor will quiver upon the wave like the plaything of a child. The tattered sails, the falling



masts, the broken helm, the wave-washed deck all present a frightful aspect. The billows swell high; like mountains they rise and fall with terrible fury upon the sinking vessel. In their terror the mariners pray to the God of the ocean and the storm for help. Lips long accustomed to blasphemy now utter supplications for mercy. But deaf to all their cries the storm rages on. One by one the unhappy men are swept away. Their last prayer mingled perhaps with the name of wife or child, rings out like a hollow wail over the deep, and all is hushed. The ship herself, unwilling to yield, struggles on a moment longer, and then with a terrible plunge descends to the bottom of ocean, and not one single object is left to mark the spot.

Such is the sad history of many of the most promising young men of our land. They commence life under the most flattering circumstances, but ere they have accomplished half the task, they are overtaken by storms of moral and commercial embarrassment, and are shipwrecked just where hope had painted the brightest vision of success. With this fact before me, I have concluded to present for your consideration this evening *a few themes for profitable meditation*. As the mariner starts upon his voyage, there are certain facts and principles which he must keep before his mind. He must remember that storm is almost inevitable, and must be prepared to guard against it.



If he allows it to overtake him while he has all sail spread, and every sheet of canvas out, he must expect shipwreck. He will perhaps be becalmed, and against such an emergency must have a sufficient supply of bread and water. He is liable to be overtaken by piratical crafts, and hence must be ready for a conflict with them. If he goes forth thoughtless of all these considerations, his voyage will most certainly prove unsuccessful, his ship will founder in mid ocean, and the morning wave will sweep back to the city of his birth to tell his wife that she is a widow.

There are certain facts which all young men should remember as they commence the active duties of life. Remembered and acted upon, they will prove like the forethought of the mariner, and prevent the destruction of their enterprises. Forgotten, they will lead to the most disastrous consequences, and a want of the knowledge which these principles afford, will prove a source of misfortune and disappointment. You will allow me therefore to enumerate a few points on which we may do well to meditate, that our profiting may appear to all men.

I. YOUTH IS THE PERIOD WHEN THE CHARACTER IS FORMED. This is universally true. I am not prepared to admit that there is a single exception. All past experience testifies that in youth the man is moulded, and the bent given to his character. Even



in those cases where the young man grows up virtuous and respected, and at thirty or forty years of age becomes corrupted and debased, we shall find if we rigidly examine his early history, that in his youthful days the foundation of a vicious character was laid, but in consequence of the peculiar circumstances under which he was placed, that character was not developed. This is the testimony of many who have died upon the scaffold. They have stated that the basis of their horrid crimes was laid perhaps in childhood, or in youth, but being surrounded by virtuous friends, the evil passions were restrained, but continued pent up in the bosom like the fires of a volcano. When years had rolled away, and there was less desire and inducement to keep the favor of society, these passions like the fires of heated Vesuvius, sent out their dreadful streams of moral destruction. On the other hand you find many who in their younger days were vicious, whose youth was stained with crime; but who as years rolled away reformed from vice and became useful members of society. A careless observer of human nature would suppose that reformation was the result of the thought and reflection of years, that as the mind became more mature, it became dissatisfied with the follies and crimes of youth. But in a majority, and perhaps I may say in all these cases, this is not the fact. Reformation instead of being the result of the experience and observation and re-



flection of years, may be traced back to childhood, to some isolated circumstance in youth, to the counsel of some Sabbath-school teacher, to the prayer of a dying father, to the exhortation written upon the blank leaf of the Bible by a sainted mother, or to something else which years of crime have been unable to efface from the memory. To illustrate this point a few cases will suffice. The character of Napoleon Bonaparte was formed in youth. His weak but ambitious friends taught him that he would at one day be a great conqueror. To inspire him with the same feelings, they formed mimic armies, and set him at the head of them, gave him a love of conquest and predominance, and thus laid the basis of his future character. Had the same care and expense been used to make of him a different being, the world would never have been astonished by his deeds of blood and crime. He might have been a Luther, a Howard, a Wilberforce, but for this unfortunate direction of his youth. The plays of his childhood made him the ambitious tyrant, and sent him like a scourge across the continent of Europe. Hume was a sceptic. It is said that in his early years he was a devout and conscientious believer in the word of God, but while young was in some debating association appointed to bring forward for sake of controversy, the arguments of the infidel. He consented. He studied long, brought his acute mind into contact



with the sophistry of sceptics, and ere he was aware of it, had embraced their notions. Like melted lava his mind received sceptical impressions, and then congealed, and his whole after life bore the deformed and sightless image of infidelity. It is said of Voltaire, one of the most brilliant writers of his age, that when five years old he committed to memory an infidel poem, and was never able after that to undo its pernicious influence upon his mind. He lived and died a corrupter of the world, and thousands who have been ruined by him will bewail his memory to all eternity.

It is said of one of the regicides who condemned to death the unfortunate Charles Stuart, king of England, that in early life he was of immoral character, but when about ten years of age he was passing a church in London, and stood at the door a-while to listen. He heard distinctly only one sentence, "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha." He passed on to the commission of crime, but that fearful sentence followed him everywhere. At the age of twenty, it had produced such an impression upon him that he determined to reform, and became a man of influence and virtue. After the fall of Cromwell and the restoration of the crown, he fled to another country, and there when nearly eighty years of age, that single sentence weighed upon his mind and induced him to become a



believer in Christ, as well as a man of virtue. This same sentiment will be illustrated in the lives of all of us. As young men we are forming characters and habits which will affect our old age, and make us virtuous or vicious, happy or miserable, in life's decline. I think I hazard nothing in saying that but few characters change materially after the age of twenty-five or thirty. By that period habits become fixed, impressions formed, and the future character of the man made. Nor is there so wide a difference in the minds of the young, as many seem to suppose. There are not those towering distinctions at birth, which in after years make some intellectual wonders, and assign others to ignorance and degradation. Though a natural difference of mind does undoubtedly exist, yet I apprehend that early impressions, and the discipline of youth, go further to make men intellectual giants or pigmies, than any original endowment of mind. The bearing of these remarks and illustrations upon young men will be plainly seen. If character is formed in youth, then it follows that we are moulding our future lives, and by every act, writing out our own history. If we form correct, virtuous, and manly habits, they will follow us to our graves, they will mark us through all our earthly course, and be the ornaments which shall deck our declining years. Look among the aged, and you will find various characters ; the vicious and the virtuous, and if you search



out the history of each, you will find that age corresponds with youth. The miser was miserly when he was young. The aged gambler commenced gambling in some form when he was young. The drunkard learned the vice in his youth. The hoary thief was a dishonest boy. The sceptic drank in the poison of his infidelity in early life. On the other hand, you will find that the virtuous, laid the basis of that virtue in years long since gone by. The lover of inspiration learned it on his mother's knee, or around the family altar. The respecter of God, learned it ere this deceitful world had marked its images of sin and woe upon the soul, as deeply as in mature years. Ask Philip Doddridge where he obtained the elements of his noble character? and he will tell you the story of his mother, teaching him to love God by sentences written on the tiles which composed the hearthstone. Ask Richard Baxter where he obtained his character? and he will tell you of the efforts made by his father upon his youthful mind and heart. Go to a host of others and ask the same question, and they will point back through years of sin and sorrow to youth or early manhood. Scripture, nature, history, are all full of the same sentiment, and in their various ways inculcate the same truth. They alike declare that age is unbending as the forest oak, while youth is as pliable as the tender sapling — that age is as insensible to new impressions as the har-



dened rock, while youth is as yielding as the undried clay.

A pebble on the streamlet scant,  
 Has turned the course of many a river ;  
 A dewdrop on the baby plant,  
 Has warped the giant oak forever."

Hence if we would form right characters ourselves, or help others to form right characters, we must begin before the middle of life. We must take the sapling ere it becomes a gnarled and tangled oak ; we must take the little rivulet ere it has become swollen to a mighty river ; we must take the clay ere it has been hardened into flinty rock, and rendered insensible to impressions.

II. YOUTH IS A SEASON OF GREAT ARDOR, GREAT FOLLY, AND GREAT MISTAKES. The ardor of youth is proverbial. Scarcely a young man can be found whose heart does not beat with high hopes, and whose bosom does not thrill with strong emotions. So short has been their acquaintance with the world, that they have not learned how deceitful are its pleasures, and how vain its pursuits. Hence they are flattered by every prospect, and engage in the various employments of life with the whole heart and strength. Old men distrust the world, they have been cheated by its hollow promises so many times, that they have become cautious and prudent. Not so with the young. If you will look over community



you will find that those who are pushing into every hazardous enterprise, who are concocting schemes for reforming or deforming men, who embrace the wild and extravagant theories which are abroad, are drawn mostly from the young and inexperienced portion of society. Old men love the past, and live in it. Young men live in the future. Progress is their watchword, and they move onward, whatever may be before them. Our fathers respect venerable institutions, and have no desire for change. Their sons look with contempt upon the past, and regard nothing on account of its antiquity. The old way of living is tedious and irksome, and men live faster, move faster, think faster than in former times. Old men are content with doing a reasonable business; young men need a California to make them rich in a single hour. Our old men are willing to live in comfortable habitations in the quiet village; our young men talk of revelling in the halls of the Montezumas. Our old men are willing to study to be wise, and have made life a college course; our young men are ground out through intellectual mills, into the hopper of which the dunce and the prodigy go together. Our old men are content to live at home and practise life's stern duties; our young men talk of travel. They wish to stand on the Alps, or dig into the ruins of Herculaneum and Pompeii. They must walk the blood-stained streets of Paris — traverse the lanes



and avenues of London, or mingle with the Italian throng as they crowd the streets of Rome. Our old men were willing to work for the bread they ate, and the cup of milk which they drank when weary ; our young men have made servants of iron, and fire, and water, and converted them into curious combinations, to perform labor once done by human hands. These different changes have been effected by the restless activity of the young. The earnestness of youth is devoted to improvement, and the changes which we see, are the results of that earnestness. Nor would we have it otherwise. Improvement is the order of life, progress the law of society, and God has wisely placed old men and young men in the world together, that the young might drag the car of reformation, while the aged guide and control it.

But while the energy of young men suggests so many improvements in society, it also leads to many mistakes and follies. They who rush forward at every call, heedless of consequences ; who stand in front of every battle ; who are earnest for every new theory, will be liable to meet with disaster and defeat. The locomotive on the rail road, which has the heaviest press of steam, will perform the journey in the shortest time, and will also be more liable to leap from the track, and dash itself and the train which follows it, into ruin. The liability to disaster is proportionate to the pressure of steam. The mail-steamer



in crossing the ocean will be likely to make a quicker passage, if she builds her fires hotter, and crowds her sails, and generates her steam more liberally; and she will also be more likely to meet with accident, and go to the bottom of the ocean. The danger is commensurate with the extraordinary speed. Thus is it, to some extent, with the energy of youth. While confined to certain limits, and flowing in a proper channel, it will secure the desirable result. But the more haste we make to be rich, the more eagerly we grasp for fame, the more zealous we are in any cause, the more liable are we to overstep the limits of prudence, and fall into fatal errors.

And thus has it been in all the history of the past. The enthusiasm of youth has led many into sad mistakes, and these mistakes have ended in the complete overthrow of the most brilliant schemes. How many young men have commenced business with the laudable purpose of supporting themselves. Before them the road to fortune was open, and they entered it. One speculation after another presented itself, one plan after another was adopted. Day by day, and week by week, they ventured into deeper water, and took upon themselves new obligations. Soon, instead of finding themselves the possessors of a fortune, they were bankrupt, and perhaps with the loss of money, came also the loss of credit and character. The tide of life is dotted with the wrecks of character,



with the ruins of young men who started fair and with high prospects of usefulness, but who have failed, signally and fearfully failed. And why have they failed? Simply because they refused to profit by the experience of those who have preceded them, and have allowed the zeal of youth to trample upon reason, and blind the judgment and the conscience. A majority of the failures which are made by our young men might be avoided, would they heed the injunction of Paul, and meditate upon these things, which so intimately concern their success in this life, and their happiness beyond it. They who rush out into life determined to pluck its flowers, must look and see where they grow. If they bloom upon the border of some dark precipice, they must tread cautiously, lest they stumble in the attempt to secure the prize. If some venomous serpent lies coiled up at the root, they must be careful lest the hand which plucks the flower should be bitten by the viper.

III. YOUTH IS A PERIOD OF GREAT EFFORTS AND GREAT RESULTS. There has existed a notion in time past, that age alone was capable of performing great deeds, and accomplishing vast results. This notion has become to a great extent, a common sentiment, and we are apt to pass by young men, and deem them unworthy of notice, because their heads are not covered with silver locks, and their limbs trembling on the borders of the grave. I admit that age has the



most experience, that old men are likely to act with more prudence and caution, but I also contend that youth may put forth efforts, and lead to great results. The history of the world has proved, that the young are better fitted for active or laborious service, than are their fathers, and in every enterprise where labor is required, we naturally look to young men. Our hostile armies are composed, to a considerable extent, of young men ; our most distinguished writers and statesmen, commenced in early life ; our poets and orators earned some of their freshest laurels while in the morning of their days.

From a work\* published a few years since, I have gathered a few facts bearing upon this very point — facts which clearly illustrate my position, and prove that youth is capable of great deeds, and if properly improved will accomplish vast results. “It is said that one of the greatest military men of the world, Alexander the Great, was less than *thirty-three* years old when he subdued his enemies in Greece, took possession of the neighboring countries, passed into Asia, conquered the whole of Asia Minor, Syria, Egypt, and Persia, besides countless smaller kingdoms and a large part of India.” “Hannibal, who was the most formidable enemy which Rome ever had, was made General at the age of *twenty-two*. By the time he was *twenty-eight*, he

\* Patton's Lectures to Young Men.



had driven the Romans from Spain and Gaul, had crossed the Alps with an immense army, and by the battle of Canae, had brought Rome itself into danger of capture." "Bonaparte, at the age *twenty-seven*, was made General of the French armies; after which he subdued the whole of Italy, passed into Egypt, was made First Consul at the age of *thirty*, and having like Hannibal crossed the Alps, and by the decisive victory of Marengo again subdued Italy, was eventually crowned Emperor, having gained some of his most brilliant victories by the time he had reached the age of *thirty-five*." "Hernando Cortes, the conqueror of Mexico, pushed his way up from obscurity, became commander of the expedition to Mexico, and by consummate boldness and unmitigated villainy, became at the age of *thirty-five*, the master of the Aztec Empire." "If we turn to literary men, poets, orators and philosophers, we find Burke laying the foundation of his reputation for eloquence as a writer and speaker, as early as his *twenty-seventh* year, and composing his celebrated treatise on the 'Sublime and Beautiful,' in his *twenty-eighth* year." "Lord Bacon at the age of *sixteen* had conceived the design of overthrowing the philosophy of Aristotle, and at that early period in his life had openly expressed and promulgated his opposing views." "Sir Isaac Newton had made his most important discoveries in astronomy and mathematics, before he had



reached the age of *thirty*." "The younger Pitt became Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Prime Minister of England, at the early age of *twenty-four*, and for many years conducted with consummate ability the complicated affairs of that great nation." "Lord Byron published many of his choicest poems at the age of *thirty*." "Burns gave to the public some of his most exquisite compositions at the age of *twenty-seven*."

"Among theologians we are struck with the fact that Calvin composed his celebrated 'Institutes,' when he was but *twenty-five* years of age." "Philip Melancthon is a yet more wonderful instance of what can be accomplished in the early period of life. At twelve years of age he went to the University of Heidelberg, and at fourteen was made Bachelor of Arts. At *seventeen*, he was made Doctor of Philosophy. At *twenty-one*, he was appointed Professor of Ancient Languages in the University of Wittemberg. While but a lad, he distinguished himself, and won the praise of Germany and the world." "Alexander Pope, before he was *twenty-five*, had written many of his best poems." "Dr. Dwight commenced the 'Conquest of Canaan,' when he was but *sixteen*, and completed it at the age of *twenty-three*." To these cases might be added a multitude of others, and among them, many drawn from the history of our own country. Eight of the men who signed the declaration of independence, and gave to the world



that noble document, were under *thirty-five* years of age. Lafayette was but *eighteen* when he stood shoulder to shoulder with some of the most distinguished officers in the American army, and at the age of *twenty-four*, led on the National Guards of France. Washington was but a lad when he was entrusted with important offices, and some of his most distinguished battles were fought in his early youth. John Quincy Adams, at the age of *fourteen*, was private secretary to the Minister Plenipotentiary to the Court of St. Petersburg. From this time, until he was chosen president, he continued to receive the most brilliant offices which the government could bestow, and furnishes us with a remarkable instance of what may be accomplished in one's early days. He performed more in boyhood, than most men accomplish in a long life of active service.

I refer to these cases as illustrations of the truth of the statement, that youth is capable of great results, and is distinguished for great deeds as well as for great follies and crimes. They also prove, that all which has been done to reform the world or enlighten it, or make it wiser, has not been done by age alone, but that youth has had its share in the improvement and adornment of mankind. If we should take from the world what has been done by young men, literature and science would be divested of half their beauty, and history would lose half the brilliant



deeds which it now records with triumph and satisfaction.

Thoughts like these, my readers, we should remember. If there is one sin to which youth is more addicted than another, if there is one fault to which young men are exposed more than another, it is the fault, the sin of thoughtlessness. There is a haste, a precipitancy in the movements of the young, which not unfrequently involves in ruin the fairest prospect of success in life. The apostle Paul who had seen more of life than his young disciple, Timothy, knew this, and urged him to *meditate* upon things pure and excellent, that his profiting might appear to all. The same caution is needed by the young men of the present age, and unless they heed it, they will place in jeopardy the dearest interests which they cherish. But few of the sins of youth are committed deliberately. The young man does not often deliberately and thoughtfully strike the blow which commits him to the dungeon, or brings him to the scaffold—he does not deliberately enter into schemes to ruin others, by involving them in pecuniary or moral embarrassment—he does not often wilfully and maliciously enter any path of crime. But ere he is aware, he is drawn step by step to such a distance from the path of virtue, that the passage of return is hedged up, the way back rendered impassable, and he goes on to ~~and~~ maliciously and designingly what he com-



menced thoughtlessly. Did men think more, how many a hand would be held back from crime; how many lips would be sealed from perjury; how many feet would turn away from the gates of hell. You have seen the sun as he arose in the east, and dissipated the clouds which impeded his way—you have seen that sun struggle through the mists of morning, a bright and shining luminary, and rise higher and higher in his heavenly progress, until the eye of the eagle was unable to withstand his gaze; you have seen that sun high in the heavens, scattering his beams upon man below, and riding in his cloudy chariot crowned with fire, the acknowledged king of day. You have also seen a comet, a strange erratic thing, seemingly controlled by no law, subject to no government, flaming through heaven, dazzling the world for awhile, and then passing away in darkness. Like that sun we may commence in the morning of life, our steady onward progress, governed by laws of nature and of God; we may progress in life, each year excelling the past in virtue, in happiness, in holiness, in usefulness. Like that sun moving on in an undeviating course, obeying with all precision the principles which control its progress, we may move on governed by laws as certain, and better understood; until our path shall be like the path of the just, which shineth brighter and brighter unto the perfect day. Or we may be



like the comet, dashing from its course, and setting worlds on fire. Like the comet we may obscure ourselves as soon, and as suddenly. By turning from the path of virtue and true honor, by leaving the great principles which God has laid down in his word, we shall be nothing but wrecked and ruined spirits. Meditate on these things, while life is young and buoyant, and thy sun shines fair. Be virtuous, be good, be circumspect, and no weapon formed against thee shall prosper.

"Virtue may be assailed, but never hurt;  
Surprised by unjust force, but not enthrall'd;  
And even that which mischief meant most harm,  
Shall in the happy trial prove most glory."



### LECTURE III.

#### FOUR SOURCES OF SUCCESS IN LIFE.

SO RUN THAT YE MAY OBTAIN.—1 *Corinthians* 9: 24.

REFERENCE is had in this passage, and in others of a similar character, which are scattered through the writings of the apostle Paul, to the foot races of the ancients. In the Olympic games, foot-racing seems to have been one of the most honorable and one of the most common. Men in high rank, and men in low rank, were accustomed in these exercises to contend for the prize, and he who was successful was wreathed with laurels, and received the praises, and almost the homage of the people. As the competitors ran in the race-course, they were cheered by the assembled multitude, and the victor deemed himself raised to the highest pinnacle of earthly fame.

Paul in the text is exhorting the Corinthian Christians to run the spiritual race, and earnestly contend for the spiritual prize. He urges them not to run for



a corruptible crown, a fading laurel, or a transitory breath of applause ; but for an incorruptible crown, an unfading laurel, an imperishable glory. He wishes them to imitate the conduct of the ambitious racers, as they press on to secure the reward set before them, and be as zealous to run the Christian race, as were they to receive a cluster of evergreens, and the shouts of an excited multitude.

Human life may well be compared to a race-course, in which a countless number of persons are contending for the prize. The aged have nearly finished — the young have just commenced. The prize set before them is success, which most persons suppose to be a competent support, an unsullied reputation, and a useful life. And indeed if we confine ourselves to the present life, and leave out the future, we find that these are the chief elements of prosperity, which it is the duty as well as the right of the young man to secure if possible. But in order to secure prosperity and success in this life, care must be taken and effort put forth. It is not every aspirant for wealth, fame, and pleasure, that will secure them. It is a race in which hundreds and thousands are disappointed at every trial, and where one succeeds, and receives the wreath of victory, many others tire and faint ere half the course is finished. In the Olympic games, the racers were required to make extensive preparation for the trial. For ten whole months they



were accustomed to exercise themselves, and were trained by different masters, to all those exercises which were calculated to give strength and vigor to the body. Their diet was strictly regulated, and during a part of the time, their only food consisted of dried figs, nuts, and other similar fruits. When they entered the race, they were required to lay aside all unnecessary clothing, and divest themselves of everything which could impede their progress, or prevent their running with the greatest speed.

For the race of life, preparation will be needed. The young man who enters it, and is bent on securing success, will find that one path, and one alone, leads to it; that all the other avenues and lanes of life, though apparently parallel, are leading in different directions, and are filled with pitfalls and dangers; that there is but one star which guides the traveller through it, while all other lights are as deceptive as the *ignis fatuus*, which plays with phos- phoric beauty over marshy grounds, upon which if the foot of man shall tread he will be placed in fearful jeopardy. He will find that life is no rail road, along which we are borne without toil or effort, on cushioned seats or downy pillows; that life's great employment does not consist in plucking flowers and listening to sweet music. He will find life to be a race, a contest not of whistling locomotives, not of white-winged ships, but of toiling men, on foot, shoulder to shoulder,



struggling for the prize. With this view of human life, I proceed to enumerate SOME OF THE SOURCES OF SUCCESS.

I. INDUSTRY. It is a law of God, an ordinance of Heaven, that man shall work. It is a fixed principle, a certain law, that in the sweat of the brow shall the bread be eaten. There is no law which specifies a man's employment, or assigns him to this or that post of toil. There is no arrangement of God by which one is to cultivate the earth, and another to manufacture our garments and construct our dwellings. He has in no way, other than by the arrangement of his providence, made one man the producer, and another the distributor of his bounty. But he has made labor and toil essential to success in life, and has sent his decree to all nations, that he who worketh not, shall not eat. I am aware that sometimes a fortune is made in a single day; that by some turn of the wheel, a poor man is made unexpectedly rich, and raised at once from poverty to affluence. But such fortunes are exceptions to the ordinary course of events, and as a general thing, become a curse to those who inherit them, or to their children. The ideas which men cherish of becoming rich in a moment, of making a fortune by a ticket in the lottery, by a throw of dice, by a commercial speculation, are all chimerical. God has ordained it otherwise, and though by these methods, money in immense



sums, is sometimes obtained, yet it goes as easily as it comes. The only path to wealth in which the young man can travel with safety is *industry*. The only way in which he can build up a fortune worth possessing, is by toil—the toil of years. Deluded and deceived by phantom appearances, the farmer is often induced to leave his plough, the mechanic his workshop, the tradesman his store, and the student his books, to embark in some wild chase for wealth, some erratic scheme for gaining the smiles of the god of gold, instead of being content to plod along in the old way, adding, month by month, to the increasing fund deposited in the bank or invested in stocks. Some brilliant chance is presented, by which if things work well, the hundred dollars which is on deposit, may be turned into a thousand. Filled with the hope of being rich at once, the little sum which has been earned by hard service, is invested, the note of the speculator is taken, and the dupe begins to dream of high houses, broad lands, swift horses—*all his own*. Months roll on, and he finds that the scheme was all the deception of a villain, and the little treasure which was placed in his hands is gone. If you will glance at the lives of those men who have amassed large fortunes, who have been eminently successful in commercial projects, you will find them to be men of correct business habits, and of unwonted effort. You will find that they have arisen early in the morning, that



they have worked hard during the day, and remained up late at night. Their minds and hands have been busy, their whole attention has been given to the object of their pursuit, and they have been successful. Had they in early years substituted hazard and speculation for hard work, they would have failed of securing the object of their desires. Had they been deluded by some gold-mine monomania, and left their families and homes, and gone forth across mountains and rivers and plains, amid wild beasts and fiercer men, to dig for the shining ore, they would have dug into their own graves. Had they listened to the voice of every wild-brained moneymaker, their fortune would have consisted only of the notes of bankrupt speculators. Had they tried the gaming-table, they might also have tried the penitentiary and the prison.

I know there is a charm about this speedy way of making money, but it should be resisted. The young man goes into the bowling-alley, the gaming-saloon, and sits down there to see the sport. In a moment one of the players becomes the winner, and scrapes the shining gold at once into his pocket. "How easily this is done," exclaims the novice. "Here I have toiled hard to earn ten shillings during the day, and this man has made ten dollars in a single hour." He feels for his purse, and finds in it a little money which he was reserving for his wife and child at home. He



sits down to play. He wins. Twice, thrice, he wins. He runs away to the savings-bank, where he has laid up a few hundred dollars. All the way he dreams of gold—a fortune. The gambling-room seems full of money. How rich he will be to-morrow! His wife shall now live in splendor—his child shall be brought up in luxury. With one dollar he won ten, and with his hundreds he may win thousands. Thus speculating he returns to the gay saloon. The sharpers see him come, and wink at one another. They know that the earnings of years are in his purse, and their code of honor requires its transfer to their pockets. The foolish one sits down among them, and the game commences. They urge him to drink. He never used wine before, but it will sharpen his wits now, and he drains the cup. The game excites him. He wins and loses—loses and wins. At midnight he thinks of returning to his home, but on counting his money, he finds that on the whole, he has been a loser. He has twenty or fifty dollars less than when he commenced. He must win that back again. Again they gather around the table closer than before, and our hero is more mad than ever. He has become reckless. He stakes his all, and loses. The toil of years is gone. Excited, maddened, infuriated, drunk, he rushes from the fatal spot, a ruined man. With bloodshot eyes, and haggard look, he returns to his family, and changes his home



from paradise to perdition. His haste to be rich has destroyed him.

Nor can a *good reputation* be earned in an hour. Those men who have secured the respect and esteem of the world, as philosophers, statesmen, and philanthropists, have not done it by one single act, or by any short series of acts, but by patient and persevering industry. They have added virtue to virtue, one element of knowledge to another, and by degrees laid the basis of a valuable character. And thus must it be with the young men whom I address to-night. If they would be successful in life, if they would acquire property, secure the respect of mankind, and be useful while they live, they must do it by the patient and persevering industry of years. Instead then of devising schemes for sudden aggrandizement, go to work in your calling, whatever it may be, lose but few half-days, and avoid all those military and civic societies which are forever laying assessments. Be punctual to all your appointments. Make it a principle never to be left by the cars or the stage-coach, never too late at the table, in the workshop, or in the family. Fortunes and characters are sometimes lost by a want of punctuality, and one of the most disagreeable and unprofitable habits which we can form, is, to be *always late*. A distinguished man in a neighboring State, a man of wealth and influence, was asked, how he secured so large a fortune in so



few years? Without giving a direct reply, he said: "I was never late at an appointment, or behind my time, in my life."

Whatever your business may be, *persevere in it*. Do not be a mechanic to-day, and a trader to-morrow — a lawyer to-day, and a minister next week — a school-master now, and a physician soon. "He who has learned all trades is good at none," and he who is driving from one employment to another, will generally fail in all. The chimney-sweep with his black face and sooty blanket, will become a richer man than one who stays in one branch of business only until he can find another.

Remember, too, that industry is honorable, and idleness disgraceful. The rich man, the possessor of millions, who allows his wealth to purchase for him exemption from toil, is a disgrace to his race. He forfeits not only his claim to his fortune, but to his character, and should be regarded as one of the *drones* which society is compelled to drag along with it. The notion which prevails extensively in Europe, and in our southern States, and to some extent, in enlightened and beloved New England, that labor is disgraceful, is a false notion, and should receive the contempt of all men. The green-jacket of the mason, or the carpenter, besmeared with lime, or covered with dust, is as honorable as the broadcloth of the merchant whose ships are in every port. The black-



smith's hammer is as honorable as the sheriff's staff. The busy hum of labor, is as eloquent as the plea of the lawyer, or the charge of the judge. And so all those men who have been truly great have regarded it. Washington was not ashamed to acknowledge himself a farmer, and when his services were required by his country, he went from his field to the presidency, and when he had accomplished his mission, he retired to his toil again. A large majority of the men who have been members of Congress, have been hard-working, industrious farmers and mechanics, who have been selected by the people, as best adapted to aid in the councils of the nation. The best and greatest men we have, are found to be those who regard labor as an honor rather than a crime. An amusing anecdote is related of Prof. Stuart, one of the best scholars of the age, which illustrates his opinion of that class of men who despise toil, and seek to avoid it: "A student from one of the southern States, in the Theological Seminary at Andover, had purchased some wood and was exceedingly embarrassed at being unable readily to obtain some one to saw it for him. He went to Prof. Stuart, to inquire what he should do in such an unfortunate predicament. The learned professor replied, that he was out of a job himself, and he would saw it for him."\*

II. FRUGALITY. If there is a contemptible man

\* Arvine's Cyclopædia.



on earth, one who seems to have lost sight of the true design of life, one who has no idea of true enjoyment, it is the avaricious miser. It is a sad sight to see a human being, whose spirit will soon stand before God, and whose body will ere long crumble back to dust and ashes, heaping up gold, only that he may hide it from every gaze but his own, that he may count it over and over, and dream about it at night, and gloat over it by day, *and die*. It is also disgusting to see a man, who if he does not go to such an extreme, seems desirous of keeping all he gets, refusing the calls of benevolence, denying the claims of nature, that he may retain what he by honesty or dishonesty, may have secured. But if avarice and covetousness are to be condemned, so are extravagance and prodigality. There are many young men in the country, who practise no economy in their pecuniary transactions. While they have money, it goes with a lavish hand. The present moment, they provide for, and leave the future to care for itself. It matters not whether their income is three hundred or three thousand dollars, they spend it all, and until they come to the bottom of the purse, they live high and fast. I think I may be allowed to say that extravagance is one of the sins of youth. In the desire which young men have to avoid a mean, niggardly spirit, they are apt to lean to the side of prodigality, and become spendthrifts. This is



the reason why we find so few men who are in possession of any considerable amount of property. Every desire must be gratified, every wish complied with, and thus thousands are kept poor, who otherwise would be in independent circumstances. Fortunes are squandered every year by those who in after life will look back with regret to the scenes of youth; squandered, too, to secure objects which are entirely worthless.

I will not, of course, specify the particulars in which economy may be practised. They will readily present themselves to your own minds, and if you will appeal to your past experience, short as it may have been, you will find it confirming my statement. True, the amount spent daily in the purchase of useless things is small. When looked at by itself, it seems an insignificant sum; but multiply it by the days in the year, and the number of years of life, and it is magnified to a competency, which no man would despise.

Beside the tendency of extravagance to poverty, it is the basis of many habits equally pernicious as itself. The prodigal knows not when to stop. His own substance he wastes with riotous living, the portion which he inherits from father or mother, is scattered like the leaves before the blasts of Autumn, and unless his heart is doubly guarded against temptation, he will resort to fraud or forgery to maintain the position in society which his



extravagance has purchased for him. The income of most young men is small. If they have many wants to gratify, that income will be insufficient for them, and some other source of revenue must be found. Those little "six cent" desires which accumulate so fast, are the ones which drive so many hundreds of young men to the gaming-table, and induce them to become worthless, idle, and dissipated. Extravagance is the parent of many crimes, and has destroyed fortunes, blasted characters, and been to our young men the prolific source of evil and sorrow. The records of bankruptcy, the gaming-table, the cell of the forger, the prison of the felon, are all eloquent upon this subject, and utter their mournful lessons of wisdom and experience,

"Look round, the works of waste behold,  
 Estates dismember'd, mortgag'd, sold!  
 Their owners now to jails confin'd,  
 Show equal poverty of mind."

III. TEMPERANCE. Intemperance has long been a fearful scourge. Though checked and controlled to some extent now, it is still making fearful ravages. Years ago almost all men were in the habit of using intoxicating liquors. Through whole communities but few could be found, who had rigidly abstained from its use. The farmer could not plough his field without it. The mechanic could not hew his timber, or fashion his iron, without it. The lawyer could not prepare



his brief, the physician could not visit his patients without it. The minister could not preach without it, and doubtless many of the sermons of our old divines were written and delivered under its influence. It was used at the marriage festival, and in the chamber of mourning, in the halls of the living, and over the graves of the dead. It was the companion of solitude, and the friend of the crowded assembly; it held dominion in the house of God, and amid scenes of violence and disorder. But times have changed. Intemperance, open, reeling intemperance, has become disreputable and criminal, and we shrink from the example of the tattered inebriate as from the pestilence. But still intemperance in other forms, is almost as prevalent as in the days of our fathers. The wine-cup is circulated freely and fearlessly, and hundreds of young men are ruined by it annually. Now success in life is out of the question unless the wine-cup and the maddening bowl are totally abjured, unless rigid, consistent, manly temperance is made the rule of life. Drink tendeth to poverty, and bankruptcy; ruin, rags and misery are as sure to follow a course of intemperance, as is light to follow the rising of the sun.

I knew a young man, who three years since, was virtuous, loved, and respected. He had just established himself in business, and was exceedingly prosperous. He was often seen in the house of God, and around him a little family was congregated. His connections



were respectable, and his prospects in life were quite propitious. He had an intelligent and lovely companion, whom he had taken from a home of wealth, refinement, and happiness. He had everything to make him comfortable, and lead him up to virtue and to God. But he loved his wine, and deemed it an innocent beverage. Hence he drank it, and became drunken. Step by step he descended the drunkard's pathway. Day by day he became more habituated to the fearful vice.\* Soon all restraint was gone, business was neglected, home deserted, family abused, confidence and reputation gone, and the once prosperous and respectable young man has now become an outcast and a vagabond. Month by month, I have seen the cheek of the wife grow pale, and lines of sorrow traced on her once happy countenance. Week by week I have seen her come bending to the sanctuary, to find solace here in the worship of her God. Day by day has she toiled to earn money and clothing to send to that husband who has deserted her, and whom she follows like a ministering angel. Three years have been sufficient to accomplish the whole, to blast the fondest hopes, to crush the highest aspiration, to shroud a family in ruin, to break the heart of a wife, to bring disgrace upon the child, to make the hair of the father grey with sorrow, (not with age), and send the unhappy cause of all this, along the streets, a howling, infuriated drunkard.



\* "Ah! drinking! drinking! bane of life,  
Spring of tumult, source of strife,  
Could we but half thy curses tell,  
The world could wish thee safe in hell." x

And yet with the fact before them, that intemperance is destructive to life, health, property, business, to all things good, many of our young men are bringing by the use of wine, ruin upon themselves and their families. Though the Golgotha of drunkenness is before their eyes, though all the past is pointing to the long army of inebriates who have perished in the march of time, yet they drain the cup, swallow "the beverage of hell," as though it was the water of life.

IV. HONESTY. This I conceive to be the crowning excellence of youth. An honest young man has in his bosom a treasure of more real value than the wealth of nations. Should I be asked, what would most contribute to a man's success, in any vocation whatever, I would reply: HONESTY. Should I be asked what would most certainly prevent success, I would reply: DISHONESTY. Now it occurs, that to dishonest practices, the young men of our land are particularly exposed. While females are protected from the temptations to this sin, while from the peculiarity of their situation in society, they are to a considerable extent secure, young men are surrounded with inducements and temptations. Just com-



mencing life, they wish to do well, and not unfrequently imagine, that to succeed they must make money fast, and get rich quick, and hence to secure this, will embark in many a scheme of doubtful character. The expenses of poor young men are generally more than equal to their income, and if they are bent on living extravagantly, they will be tempted to enter into many a course of folly and crime to obtain the necessary funds. But however expert the dishonest man may be, however long he may go on uninterrupted in his villany, however successful he may be at the onset, he will assuredly fail. The forger cannot long continue that sin without detection; the counterfeiter will assuredly be taken in his own snare; the gambler will come to poverty, and the thief will bring himself to the prison and the dungeon. There is no safety for a young man in the early period of life, without strict and unbending integrity in word and deed. Complete failure will sooner or later, come upon every man who does not subscribe to the principles of rectitude. I know that dishonesty is prevalent. I know that it exists everywhere, and to a fearful extent enters into all the affairs of life. As Shakspeare says :

† "To be honest, as this world goes,  
Is to be one picked out of ten thousand." \*

Not seldom is the clerk taught to inform the customer, that certain goods cost such a sum, that they



are durable and fashionable, when he knows it to be false. Not seldom is the ignorance of the purchaser made the cause of a "good trade," and apprentices are led to look upon such a fraud as a harmless transaction. In these and a thousand other ways are the principles of honesty shamefully violated and outraged, and the basis is laid for a long and aggravated course of crime and duplicity. But the old maxim, "honesty is the best policy," will be found to be true in all the transactions of life. What though a man does make a momentary advance in his business by dishonesty? What though at the end of each year he is a hundred dollars richer than he would have been but for his fraud? What though he may have enlarged his store and beautified his residence, and secured the smiles of the wealthy? What though he is enabled to ride in his carriage, and dress in gilt and gold? Will not the vengeance of God follow him? Will not his ill-gotten gains rust and canker his heart? Will not commercial distress or some other element of destruction sweep away his property, taking the well-earned with the ill-gotten?

I knew a young man who started in life with high hopes and prospects. He had a little property to commence with, and was determined that it should increase at all hazard. Honestly or dishonestly, he was bound to be rich. His motto was, "All is right in trade," and well did he carry it out. He thought



it was the duty of his customers to find out defects in the goods which they purchased of him; they were the ones to discover what was bad in the bargain. He supposed he was clear when he had made the sale, and felt compelled by no principle of morality to help his customers make good bargains. Thus it continued awhile. He would openly boast of having made this sum and that sum, from this and that person. He seemed to be growing rich, his place of business was crowded. His fair stories and smooth looks, drew a crowd of visitors, and for awhile he made money very rapidly. But the curse—God's curse was on him and his business. When he least expected it, a great failure in another city occurred, the intelligence of which came upon him like a clap of thunder in a cloudless day. Other failures followed, and he began to reap the reward of his dishonesty. When he began to sink, reports of his dishonesty, which until then had been hushed, spread like wild-fire, and soon he found it impossible to continue his business. Those who had money and goods were afraid of him. Confidence in his character was gone, and he was obliged to relinquish business entirely, move from the fine house in which he lived, and become a clerk, and was looked upon with suspicion even at that. I have known other men in business, who have met with disasters and failures, and have stood unaffected by them, superior to their crushing



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influence, from the simple fact that they were honest men, and could look community in the face with a consciousness that though they were unfortunate, they were not guilty. Thompson in his lectures to young men, states the following fact, which to my own mind, is of considerable interest. "The late president of the United States Bank, once dismissed a private clerk, because the latter refused to write for him on the Sabbath. The young man, with a mother dependent on his exertions, was thus thrown out of employment, by what some would call an over-nice scruple of conscience. But a few days after, when the President was requested to nominate a cashier for another bank, he recommended this very individual, mentioning this incident as a sufficient testimony to his trustworthiness. 'You can trust him,' said he, 'for he would not work for me on the Sabbath.'" Awhile since, a young man was dismissed from his place, because he would not become party to a falsehood, by which refusal the firm failed to secure several hundred dollars which did not belong to them, but which they expected to obtain. For the crime of *honesty and truth* the young man was dismissed from his position. A few days afterwards hearing of a vacant situation, he applied for it. The merchant who wished for an accountant, asked if he could refer him to any individual with whom he was known, and who would recommend him as an upright young man.



With conscious innocence, and firm in his uprightness, he replied, "I have just been dismissed from Mr. ———'s, of whom you may inquire. He has tried me, he has known me." When applied to, his former employer gave a full and free recommendation, and added, "He was too conscientious about little matters." The young man is now partner in a large firm in Boston, and is apparently becoming rich.

A multitude of cases might be added, illustrating the value of honesty, and the great danger and shame of falsehood and fraud. Business men will rehearse them to you by scores, and prove that under any circumstances, "honesty is the best policy." And so you, my young friends, will find it in all your dealings with your fellow-men, and as you grow older in life, the conviction will become stronger and deeper, that a good reputation for honesty and manliness is above all price.

"The purest treasure mortal lives afford,  
Is spotless reputation; that away,  
Men are but gilded worms or painted clay."

Remember these things as you advance in life, my young brethren, and as you grow older preserve your integrity. Be above the little arts and tricks of small men, and if you grow rich, let it be by honest and patient industry. Build not up a fortune from the labors of others, from the unpaid debts of credi-



tors, from the uncertain games of chance, but from manly effort which never goes unrewarded. Never engage in any business unless you can be honest in it; if it will not give a fair living without fraud, leave it, as you would the gate of death. If after all, you are poor, if by exerting yourself nobly and manfully, if by living honestly and uprightly you cannot secure a competency, then submit to poverty, aye, to hard, grinding poverty. Be willing, if it must be so, to breast the cold tide of want and sorrow, see your flesh waste day by day, and your blood beat more heavily, than make yourself rich, at the expense of honesty.

There are other sources of success in life, which might be mentioned, but these four will suffice for the present discourse. If a young man is industrious, frugal, temperate, honest, he will also have many other valuable traits of character. These never go alone. They bring a countless host of virtues and blessings in their train. Remember also that it is not our whole object to become rich and happy here. We are immortal. There is a life beyond this — *a world to come.*

“Oh! what is life? At best a brief delight,  
A sun, scarce bright'ning ere it sinks in night;  
A flower, at morning fresh, at noon decayed;  
A still, swift river, gliding into shade.”

We know that delight will soon be gone; that sun



will set, perhaps in tears; that flower will droop, wither and decay; that river will flow on, until no human eye shall be able to trace its progress; but the life of the soul continues, and is to be affected for weal or woe, for countless ages, by its narrow and limited stay on earth. How terrible, then, is man's mission! how solemn his responsibilities! how glorious his destiny!

"'Tis God's all-animating voice  
 That calls thee from on high;  
 'Tis his own hand presents the prize  
 To thine uplifted eye;—  
 That prize, with peerless glories bright,  
 Which shall new lustre boast,  
 When victors' wreaths and monarchs' gems  
 Shall blend in common dust."



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## LECTURE IV.

### INNOCENT AMUSEMENTS.

TO EVERY THING THERE IS A SEASON, AND A TIME TO EVERY  
PURPOSE UNDER THE HEAVEN.—*Ecclesiastes* 3: 1.

WITH pride and exultation the votary of pleasure will often refer to the first few verses of the chapter, from which my text is taken, and draw from them an argument in favor of sin and folly. Is there not a time to laugh and a time to dance? Does not inspiration tell us, that mirth and cheerfulness are allowable, and that the sports of the world are proper? Have we not the example of men in all ages; not the profane and sinful merely, but the best and noblest of our race? These and kindred questions are put to us with triumph by the seekers of pleasure of all kinds, who profess to be acquainted with the chapter under consideration, if they are ignorant of all the other sacred writings. They seem to have made *this*, their study, quote it with freedom, and seem wonder-



fully impressed with the truth of Scripture, when they can bring it to bear upon the pursuit of their worldly and carnal amusements, and plead the example of some of the wise and good men who have fallen into error.

But those who read with attention the works of Solomon, could never come to any such conclusion. Raised by God to the throne, he was surrounded with everything to make him happy. His kingdom was glorious, the fame of his administration spread over the world, and wealth poured its streams lavishly at his feet. Surrounded by life's brightest scenes, he sought awhile his pleasure in them, he buildded houses, he planted vineyards, he obtained men-singers and women-singers, he had instruments of music, and in every possible way strove to satisfy the longings of his nature for happiness. Labor, wealth, skill, time, were not spared, but all contributed to the monarch's pleasure. Thus he lived awhile, until the whole head was sick, and the whole heart faint—until he was convinced that all the objects of his earthly pursuits had no abiding bliss, and he turned from them, exclaiming, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity."

Nor will the declaration of the wise man, that there is "a time to dance," extenuate any of the sinful amusements of the present age. He no more intended to justify that debasing and ruinous system, which we have at present, than to justify mur-



der when he said, there is "a time to kill." The dancing of the ancients was a religious and healthy recreation. It had no resemblance to what we call dancing now. It was performed with pure and elevated motives, and had no tendency to debase the mind or pollute the heart. One writer, thinks that "it always was a religious exercise; that dancing for amusement was sacrilege; that men who diverted it from a sacred use were deemed infamous, and declares, that there are no instances upon record in the Bible of social dancing for amusement, except that of the vain fellows, void of shame, alluded to in Micah; of the irreligious families described by Job, which produced increased impiety and ended in destruction; and of Herodias, which terminated in the rash vow of Herod, and the death of John the Baptist." All the cases, except these, were on occasions of religious festivity. Dancing was merely a token of joy and gratitude to God. It generally followed great victories, and was attended with sacred songs, and the sound of many musical instruments. As men now clap their hands and shout when any gratifying event has transpired, so the ancients sang and danced over their victories. The two sexes never united in it; men danced alone, and maidens danced alone. They crowded not into pent-up halls, they were not excited with wine, they were not impelled by passion, they were not moved by lust. The green earth was



their festive hall, the bright sun was their chandelier, the golden flowers shed their fragrance, and nature's own temple gave back the echo of their glad songs. To compare the pure, chaste worship of the ancients, with the brutish dancing of the present time, and justify one by the other, is to cast dishonor upon God, and insult the memory of his worshippers.

The only object had in view by the monarch writer, seemed to be the promulgation of the sentiment, that for all things there is an appointed time; that joy and sorrow, work and play, will come in their order, and each should be attended to in its proper place. He did not attempt to defend vice, or offer a plea for the indiscriminate pursuit of pleasure. All his writings abound with warnings and cautions, and utter loudly their remonstrance against every course of sin.

Without further introduction I will turn your attention to INNOCENT AMUSEMENTS, as the subject for consideration. I do not design to offer an apology for any of the vain amusements and seductions of the world, or lead you to look with less disapprobation upon the vices by which we are surrounded. Accursed they are, and accursed they will remain. The press may plead for them, the pulpit may apologize for them, and the whole country may be bent on their pursuit, but God's displeasure will follow them, and their votaries. I simply wish



der when he said, there is "a time to kill." The dancing of the ancients was a religious and healthy recreation. It had no resemblance to what we call dancing now. It was performed with pure and elevated motives, and had no tendency to debase the mind or pollute the heart. One writer, thinks that "it always was a religious exercise; that dancing for amusement was sacrilege; that men who diverted it from a sacred use were deemed infamous, and declares, that there are no instances upon record in the Bible of social dancing for amusement, except that of the vain fellows, void of shame, alluded to in Micah; of the irreligious families described by Job, which produced increased impiety and ended in destruction; and of Herodias, which terminated in the rash vow of Herod, and the death of John the Baptist." All the cases, except these, were on occasions of religious festivity. Dancing was merely a token of joy and gratitude to God. It generally followed great victories, and was attended with sacred songs, and the sound of many musical instruments. As men now clap their hands and shout when any gratifying event has transpired, so the ancients sang and danced over their victories. The two sexes never united in it; men danced alone, and maidens danced alone. They crowded not into pent-up halls, they were not excited with wine, they were not impelled by passion, they were not moved by lust. The green earth was



their festive hall, the bright sun was their chandelier, the golden flowers shed their fragrance, and nature's own temple gave back the echo of their glad songs. To compare the pure, chaste worship of the ancients, with the brutish dancing of the present time, and justify one by the other, is to cast dishonor upon God, and insult the memory of his worshippers.

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to offer a few thoughts on amusements, and show that the highest pleasures, are the pleasures of innocence, and that sinful amusements fail to accomplish their object. Hence I remark,

I. MEN NEED, AND WILL HAVE SOME KINDS OF RECREATION. The body was not made for constant toil, the mind was not formed for constant study. God has not ordained that life shall be spent in one continued series of efforts to secure the things of this world. He has fitted man for enjoyment, as well as labor, and made him susceptible of pleasurable emotions. He did not design him for a slave, to dig the earth awhile and die; to toil on until the hour of death comes to conduct a shattered system back to dust and ashes. On the other hand, he has given him a physical system which like the harp, may be touched to any tune. He has made the eye, the ear, the mouth, all inlets of pleasure. He has so constituted us, that we may be wound up to the highest degree of pleasure, and receive through the medium of the senses a flood of happiness. Besides this, he has arranged the outward world in such a manner, as to give man the highest enjoyment. Had God designed man for ceaseless labor, he would not have given him such a body as he now possesses, he would have darkened the eye, deadened the ear, and blunted all the nicer sensibilities, and made the hand as hard as iron, and the foot as insensible as brass. But formed for



enjoyment, we find men seeking it. After the labor of the day is over, and the toil of life done, they turn to every quarter to find some source of recreation, some avenue of life which is fragrant with flowers and which echoes with sweet music. Now this desire for recreation instead of being quenched, should be controlled and directed; instead of being totally discouraged, it should be turned into pure and holy channels, and made to result in the good of man, and the glory of God. One great mistake made by the Puritans, arose from a desire to suppress all amusements, to quench in man the desire for mirth and recreation, to make youth as sedate and grave as age, the child as sober and solemn as the sire. Hence instead of making the *Sabbath* a day of holy rest and calm enjoyment, they made it a season of constraint and fear. Children, instead of loving to have its sacred hours arrive, and hailing them with gladness, looked forward to the day as one of tedious, irksome slavery, on which they would be required to engage in meaningless services, answer difficult questions, and sit the live-long day with folded hands, and downcast eyes. They pursued the same course in relation to other things. Sinful amusements were strictly forbidden, and severely punished. By the pulpit and the press they were denounced, and yet no measures were taken to substitute innocent pleasures in their stead, or furnish panting youth with



any reasonable source of relaxation. The consequence was, the young chafed under these restraints awhile, and then broke over them, and rushed out into paths of folly and destruction.

Not unfrequently we hear parents lamenting that they cannot keep their children at home ; that they do not love home ; that very early in life they have a desire for the company of strangers, and as soon as they are old enough will wander away from the mother's prayer, and the father's counsel. But on investigation we generally find that such parents are, to a considerable extent, responsible for the conduct of their children. They have failed to make home what it ought to be. They have not made it attractive and pleasant. They have not provided amusing and profitable books, and spread around the hearthside those allurements which are necessary to engage the attention, and secure the presence of the young. It is impossible for us to love unlovely objects, and HOME cannot be loved, if the father's countenance wears a perpetual frown ; if the mother is fractious and childish ; if occasional disputes disturb the harmony and prosperity of the circle ; if no book is found on the shelf ; if no kindly sympathies are felt and expressed. The secret of saving children from destruction consists to a great extent, *in making home lovely and attractive*, and did parents understand this secret they would not be called upon so frequently to bewail



the conduct of prodigal sons, and mourn over the destruction of fallen daughters. A clergyman told me, a few days since, that he had a son, who, when quite a child manifested an uneasy and roving disposition. Home did not appear attractive, and on every occasion he would steal away to spend the evening in the company of strangers. Filled with anxiety, the father began to look about for a remedy. He watched his son, and endeavored to discover the bent of his inclination. He saw that the boy had a fondness for music, that he would visit those places where singers resorted, and where musical instruments could be found. He saw that he was most willing to visit those families where the piano was an article of parlor furniture, and where the violin or the harp made their melody. His course was founded on this discovery. He purchased at considerable expense an instrument of music, and spread through his parlor, note-books and songs, everything of that kind which the father's means would allow was furnished, and soon the son became as fond of home, as he had previously been of strangers. His talent was for music, but as he could not enjoy it at home, he searched for it where it was; but when music came to cheer his own dwelling, he had no occasion to leave the warm hearth-side of parental kindness. Were I speaking exclusively to parents, I would urge them, to make home happy, to keep all strife and bitterness away, and ever in the



presence of children wear a contented and cheerful look. If you feast, let it be at home, and let children partake of the good things; if you have newspapers in your family, have among the rest, one adapted to your children; if the profound, logical work which you read yourself, lies upon the table, let one be beside it, adapted to your children. Make them think that no place on earth can compare with home, and as they grow older, find amusement and recreation for them. Be not afraid to hear them laugh, though the house rings. When they wish for sport, do not drive them out into the street, or into the house of a good-natured neighbor, but bear a little, and remember that *you* were once a child.

The same remarks are applicable to a whole community. If there are no seasons of reasonable and pure pleasure, the young will resort to enjoyments which are vicious and destructive. If the social circle, the literary lecture, the musical concert, the debating association, the circulating library are not found, the theatre, the gaming-table, the ball-room, the brothel, will have full success. The young man needs relaxation and change, he must have it, it is in accordance with the laws of his nature, and if he cannot find it in innocent, he will resort to sinful pleasures.

I am acquainted with a town which a few years ago was notorious for the variety and extent of its



sinful amusements. Every evening the festive hall was lighted, theatrical performances were crowded with visitors, the strolling circus found ready access, and the curse of God seemed to have settled on the place. Pure religion died out, virtue seemed about to follow, and error and sin reigned triumphant. At length two young men determined to use their influence to check the progress of vice, and looking at the matter philosophically, they went to work. They first formed a debating society; then invited a learned gentleman to give them a series of weekly lectures; established an evening-school, and in these various ways attempted to direct the mind from sinful to innocent amusements. They were successful. The dancing became less frequent, theatrical performances found less encouragement, the circus was denied admittance, and the whole appearance of the town changed, and from being one of the most vicious, it has become one of the most moral and respectable places in the State. A few years wrought an entire change. Had they commenced declaiming against sinful amusements without providing innocent ones, they might have declaimed until the day of doom.

This subject is an important one, and I am glad to see the attention of the public turned to it. Men of thought, and men of action are looking upon it in a philosophical light, and I trust the day is not far distant when young men will not be driven



to vicious and degrading amusements to find relaxation.

II. THAT THE VARIOUS AMUSEMENTS WHICH HAVE BEEN DEVISED FOR THE EXPRESS PURPOSE OF GIVING RELAXATION HAVE THUS FAR ALL FAILED. The object of amusement is to draw off the mind from more serious and toilsome things, and fit it, after a temporary relaxation, to return to the duties of life with new zeal and ability. Anything which can impair the health, weaken the intellect, corrupt the heart, defeats this object. Anything which brings weariness and exhaustion, and fatigue, and unfits man to perform the duties of life, is not amusement, but vice. Hence, as we look at dancing, at theatrical performances, at gambling, and at the various modes of sinful pleasure, we find that instead of relieving the mind from care, and fitting the body for toil, they are defeating the only object for which relaxation can be sought, they are only adding new cares, new toils, new sorrows. Ask Consumption and she will tell you of the wasting form of the dancer, the hollow cough, and the weary limbs. Go into the chamber of merriment, and you will see men and women dying at half an age. Go to the gambling-saloon, and you will observe the blood-shot eye, the haggard cheek, the trembling lip. Go to the theatre, and you will find the victims of excitement, their minds warped, and their ideas of life all discolored and dis-



torted. Look at any of the schemes of pleasure which have been devised to while away time, to occupy the hours of evening without benefit, and you will find they have failed to accomplish their purpose. They give no relaxation. Perhaps at first, dancing and theatres, were less objectionable than at present, perhaps they gave pleasure and served as recreation; but they have become so corrupted, so debasing, that I see not how a virtuous person can engage in them. The object of their establishment has not been accomplished. And thus it will continue to be with all the vast variety of sinful amusements. However harmless and simple they may be at the beginning, they will grow worse and worse, and instead of serving as pleasant, healthy recreation, will tend to vitiate, corrupt, and impair.

Man was made for usefulness. He was designed by God to get good and do good, and hence any amusement to subserve well its purpose, must be blended with utility. But such is not the case with the throng of sinful pleasures by which we are encompassed. There is no utility about them. They are not formed to benefit, but to amuse; not to instruct, but please. The theatre does not make men wiser, better, or happier. The ball-room does not lighten the load of life, or take one care from the burdened mind. The gaming-table does not make life lighter, or kindle up hope in any desolate soul. If the heart is sad and



bleeding, if the mind is clouded and perplexed, if the conscience is in trouble, and sorrow is brooding over the soul, a resort to any of these pleasures will only add new bitterness to every cup, and gather a denser darkness around the sinner's path. Thus men will find it, sooner or later. They may for awhile find what they call amusement in the vain and sinful inventions of the age; they may silence the voice of conscience for a time, and in the busy whirl of pleasure and gayety, pass on heedless of the admonitions which are given them, but the end will come, and these pleasures will prove to be sources of vexation and sorrow.

III. SOME AMUSEMENTS, WHICH ARE HARMLESS, AND WHICH BLEND UTILITY WITH PLEASURE. That there are such amusements, you are all ready to admit, but the usual objection urged against them is, that they are tame and unsatisfying. With perverted tastes, the followers of the world fail to perceive the true, substantial pleasure which flows from useful amusements. But with a pure and uncorrupted taste, with a heart feelingly alive to what is truly good, useful amusements are full of recreation and enjoyment. While others fail to give the desired relaxation, these are completely successful; they unbend the mind awhile from life's severer duties, and permit it to return to those duties doubly prepared to perform them. A few of them I will briefly enumerate.



1. *Useful reading.* In these days of book-making, when the press is throwing off its daily and hourly burden of valuable and worthless volumes, we need be at no loss to make a wise and judicious selection to amuse, instruct, and benefit. Books of travel, of history, of science, of philosophy, of morals, of religion, are abundant, and within the reach of all young people. Whatever may be our peculiar feelings and inclinations, tastes and habits, we can find some kind of reading which will benefit us. If we desire to become acquainted with the past, to know how men have lived, and where they were buried, and what have been their habits, volumes of history, written in the various styles of authors having different national and mental peculiarities, and abounding with information of every character, are in our hands. If we have an inclination to travel, and possess not the means for enjoying this privilege, we may find the most delightful accounts of voyages and journeys, and at our own firesides, travel the wide world over. With the author we may ascend the highest mountains, and descend into the lowest caverns; we may visit temples, cathedrals, and pagodas; we may journey to every clime, become familiar with the people of all lands, and ere we have traveled beyond the limits of our own native town, may be acquainted with the customs and manners of all earth's tribes. If we wish to study the sciences, and learn



the discoveries of the wisest men, we have their works, their minds portrayed on paper, spread out before our gaze, and ready for our use. And while we have these, there is no occasion to resort to fiction, tragedy, and dramatic pleasures. The drama has nothing to compare for interest, with the realities of science, and there is nothing in fiction which will equal the realities of history. The drama is tame, and tasteless, compared with the history of the past, and there are scenes every year transpiring on the great theatre of the world, which make even the fictions of the most glowing writers appear insipid. Now reading is a recreation which combines pleasure with utility, amusement with profit. It does not weary the body, it does not exhaust the mind, it does not corrupt the heart. It brings vigor to each, and gives relaxation and change, and fits us for the more laborious and irksome duties of life. An hour spent in the dancing-room brings weariness and sorrow; an hour spent over a useful book, brings pleasure and profit, and expands and enlarges the deathless soul.

2. *Music.* There are some who have little or no desire to cultivate musical talents, but to others, this science is a source of exquisite enjoyment. Indeed were it not for the sweet and melting strains of music, many scenes of mirth and festivity would lose all their charm, the dancing-hall and the theatre would be as dull and senseless as the gambols of a child.



Now to the lover of harmony there is no source of recreation more reasonable and delightful. As the laboring man returns from toil, weary and dejected, the sound of music, and the song of his wife or child will cause him to forget his weariness, and lose his dejection. The simple lay will be a balsam for his wounded spirit, and in the midst of sorrow the heart will be glad. Music formed one of the prominent amusements of the ancient Hebrews. They sung everywhere, and mingled melody with joy or sorrow. The royal David with his chief musicians, Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun, with their four thousand assistants made ceaseless song, and Solomon, his son, the wisest man of his age, had men-singers and women-singers, and Josephus tells us, that the number of musicians employed by him at the dedication of the temple was *two hundred thousand*. The Greeks and Romans had their songs and their instruments of music, and frequently when they went out to battle, it was with the sound of melody. Nor shall we find music under proper circumstances to be wearisome or dissipating. It will give the mind and body relaxation and profit, and fail to impair the intellect or deprave the heart.

“Music the fiercest grief can charm,  
And fate's severest rage disarm.  
Music can change pain to ease,  
And make despair and madness please,  
Our joys below it can improve,  
And antedate the bliss above.”



There is no science which will assist in the management of children, which will serve to soften down human nature, and make the heart feel, to such an extent, as music. Those therefore who are striving to substitute music for the performances of the stage, and the dissipation of the festive hall, and the midnight revel, deserve the thanks of community; and musical exhibitions, concerts, and performances should be encouraged, not only by the lovers of pleasure, but also by the lovers of morality and religion.

3. *Traveling.* I know that extensive traveling is not within the reach of all, and yet I would recommend it to all who have the pecuniary ability. If a man remains at home all his days, if he shuts himself up within the limits of his own city, and never goes forth to behold the world, and admire the works of God, his soul will be limited and contracted. He will fail to take an enlarged view, and be unable to exert an extensive influence. There is something in an acquaintance with the world, with men and things, which gives the soul breadth and dimension, and fits it to take an ample view of the subjects which are presented. I am aware that traveling is costly; that long journeys involve much expense. All that may be urged on this point will be admitted. But do I not address some young men, who in every five years spend as much in dancing, in theatrical entertainments, and in other dissipating



amusements, as would pay the expense of a visit to Europe, or a voyage to any part of the world. Do I not speak to some, who every year squander enough to defray the expense of a journey through every State in the Union. To those who have the ability, traveling is an entertaining and profitable method of securing relaxation.

4. *Literary lectures.* To afford this kind of relaxation, our lyceums, and lecture courses, have been established. They contribute much to the pleasure and profit of society. They draw together many who would otherwise be in places of depraved and sinful pleasure. These lectures are generally prepared with considerable care, and contain whole volumes condensed. They frequently present subjects which are in themselves dry and uninteresting, and which on the printed page would give but little pleasure to the reader, but the charm of the living speaker is thrown around them, and knowledge is derived which would never be drawn from printed volumes. The value of these lectures is too little known, and too little appreciated. Were they more frequent, and better attended, we should have a more enlightened community, and a more virtuous society. Did they take the place of other degrading and disgusting sources of amusement, we should not so often behold the wrecks of character, and the ruin of unfortunate young men. We should not so often behold the



gray hairs of parents brought in sorrow to the grave, or hear them lament so frequently the downfall of their prodigal sons.

5. *Social visiting.* Young men are not fond of visiting. They deem it tedious to call from house to house, to seek an acquaintance with society. But if they would employ more of their time in this manner, they would find it a source of pleasure and profit. They would thus be enabled to make valuable acquaintances, they would see men as they are, and not as they *appear* in public life, they would get a deeper insight into human nature, they would escape the hollow and heartless salutations of public occasions, and be able better to understand "life at home." I am aware that those who congregate in large cities are often destitute of any place which they dare denominate HOME. But others who are more fortunately situated, have a duty devolved upon them by this very fact; a duty, too, which has hardly begun to be understood. In a city like this, the doors of every house should be open to our young people; they should be invited frequently to visit our families, not as strangers or dependents, but as young men who have no homes and firesides of their own. Let them know that your parlors and your sitting-rooms are always ready to receive them, and when they come give them a cordial welcome.

7. *Social gatherings.* These are somewhat com-



mon in the form of "sewing societies," which young people of both sexes attend. They are connected with the various religious congregations, and are on the whole, productive of good. Though all social gatherings will have some objections attending them, yet they are, at least, innocent substitutes for worse amusements. Every such society should have some benevolent object in view, and in no case should mere enjoyment be substituted for utility. While freedom should be given to all the social feelings, the great fact that we are immortal and accountable, should be made prominent. There are other social gatherings on various occasions, *all* of which I would not recommend. Many of them are turned to vicious purposes, and are calculated to defeat the object for which we seek recreation. There are others in which we may freely engage, in which we may take a part, and by so doing find bodily and mental relaxation. We have been made for society, formed for mutual fellowship, and if we find it not in these harmless, we shall find it in sinful and depraved circles.

"To view alone,  
The fairest scenes of land and deep,  
With none to listen, and reply  
To thoughts with which my heart beat high,  
Were irksome; for whate'er our mood,  
In sooth, we love not solitude.

8. *Paintings, and other works of art.* To most of us, the paintings of the great masters are in-



accessible. Those works which the world has admired are out of our reach; but within a few years paintings and statuary of less merit have become abundant. The late works are well-adapted to the common mind, and though in many cases destitute of artistic skill, are really valuable in giving us an idea of the scenery of various countries which we have never visited. These exhibitions form a pleasant and profitable mode of securing recreation, and deserve the patronage of all young people. The artists in almost all cases are young men, and deserve the support of community for the services which they have rendered. We have the "Voyage to Europe," the "Scenery of the Rhine;" the "Views of the Mississippi and Ohio;" the "Scenery and Battles of Mexico;" the "Model of Ancient and Modern Jerusalem;" the "Moving Statuary of the Scriptures," and a multitude of others which are all deserving of notice.

I might mention many other sources of innocent pleasure, which are combined with utility, but these will suffice. We are surrounded on all sides with opportunities to enjoy ourselves without becoming the patrons of vice, and if we will, we may secure them. There is one source of pleasure and relaxation from toil, which I ought not to omit in this enumeration, a source of pleasure and bliss which exceeds all others, and is more rational and Godlike, an



avocation in which angels are ceaselessly employed. I refer to

9. *Religion; the public and private worship of God.* I know that to many, the duties of religion would be an intolerable hardship. I am aware that they would find no pleasure in the closet, or in the praying circle, while their hearts remain unchanged, but to others the place of prayer is, of all spots on earth, the best to find calm and holy satisfaction, to obtain relief from sorrow and sin, to unbend the mind from the world's perplexities, and centre it on true and pure objects, and if you will secure that state of mind which will fit you for communion with God, you will find in it a more substantial pleasure, than this poor wretched world affords. It will sweeten every cup which Divine providence puts to mortal lips, and dispel the darkest shadow which ever gathers over the sinner's path.

“Religion is a glorious treasure,  
The purchase of a Saviour's love;  
It fills the mind with consolation,  
And lifts the soul to things above.”

Here I will leave the subject, asking you to give it that attention which its importance demands. As you go out from this house you will find some sinful amusement presenting its claim on every side. As the week rolls away, and you feel the need of recreation and change, a score of objects will present them-



selves, and hold out their tempting offers. On every hand you will be beset with vices and seductions. At such times remember the claims of God and reason. Let the fact that you are immortal and accountable, that you are not to perish in the grave, but are to live on after the destruction of matter, and the world's great wreck, and think and act in the vast future, admonish you. Contemplate yourself as a young man, created by God for a noble purpose, placed in this world as a probationer for the next, to live with angels or with demons forever. When sin presents its claims, when your associates urge you into paths of vice and folly, and all around are conspiring to shut out the voice of God, and induce thee to destroy and wrong thy nobler nature, do it not. Thou art immortal, accountable. Let this thought drive thee back from every path of sin. God is thy sire, thou art his child! Let this send thee to his arms. Remember, that

“The stars shall fade away, the Sun himself  
Grows dim with age, and Nature sinks in years :  
But thou shalt flourish in immortal youth,  
Unhurt amidst the war of elements,  
The wreck of matter, and the crash of worlds.”

It is right that man should be happy ; it is proper for him to seek amusement and enjoyment. There is nothing in nature, nothing in religion which forbids the full and free enjoyment in a *reasonable* manner,



and to a *reasonable* extent, of all the faculties which God has given us ; but while enjoying, we have no right to debase ; when seeking pleasure, we have no excuse for plucking the poison-flowers of sin. All within us, and around us, utters impressively, "the way of the transgressor is hard." While the way of life is full of precious tokens of Divine approval, the curse of the Almighty, hangs over the way of death, and though pleasure may be found for a season, and the heart beat gaily in its own fancied, but false security, the end will be as dreadful, as the beginning was fair and deceitful. Every tree in Satan's garden, hangs laden with poisoned fruit, and wo to him who plucks and eats.



## LECTURE V.

### DANGEROUS AMUSEMENTS.

DO THYSELF NO HARM.—*Acts 16: 28.*

THIS passage of Scripture is a part of one of the most interesting narratives which can be found in any of the sacred writings. It was uttered while Paul was at Philippi, a city of Macedonia. On account of his religious opinions and teachings he had been incarcerated in a dungeon, and in company with Silas had been thrust into the inner-prison. With his free spirit, unbroken by the affliction, he praised God at midnight, the whole prison resounded with the melody of a song which had never been heard there before. The prisoners in their cells heard the sweet music. Starting from their slumbers, they asked in astonishment, "What is this?" and listened with wrapt attention to the heavenly sound as it echoed on the air of night, and floated in gentle strains through their dark and gloomy dungeons. While they thus sang an earth-



quake shook the prison, the fetters fell from their chafed limbs, and they rose up, leaving their manacles behind them. Aroused by the noise and confusion of the scene, the jailor arose in terror, and saw the doors of his prison open, and the fetters struck from the limbs of the prisoners, whom he had been charged to keep in safety. Supposing that some had fled, he was alarmed, and in fear lest he should be punished, drew his sword and would have killed himself. Seeing his desperate intention, Paul cried out to him, "Do thyself no harm," and by a declaration that none had escaped, calmed his fears, and induced him to put his sword again into its sheath.

Like the Philippian jailor, men are now doing themselves (in many instances) inconceivable harm. They are their own worst enemies, and are frequently the cause of their own destruction. Thus is it with those who are living in the practice of the sinful amusements of life, and who are bent on the gratification of their carnal desires at the expense of better and holier things. Like a madman they are drawing the sword upon themselves, and doing to their own souls irreparable injury.

Upon the subject of DANGEROUS AMUSEMENTS, I wish this evening to offer a few friendly remarks, and by presenting them to you as they appear to my own mind, induce you to avoid them as destructive to the welfare of this life, and the life to come. In the



brief space allowed for a single lecture, I can only glance at a few of the most prominent sources of sinful pleasure, and by the survey of them, lead you to an abhorrence of the whole. I will call your attention then,

TO THE DANGEROUS AMUSEMENTS OF OUR TIMES. Their number is legion. They are adapted to high life, and low life, to youth and age, to every condition and rank of human beings. They do not exist alone in crowded cities, and marts of commerce, but make every spot inhabited by man, the scene of their operations. Created by God upright, surrounded with pure and profitable pleasures, man has forsaken them, and sought out many inventions. He has left the pure spring of living water, the fountain which gushes from the hand of God, and hewn out to himself broken cisterns which can hold no water. Fitted for the skies, made by the Creator to look upward, and destined for immortality, man has withdrawn his gaze from Deity, and fixed it on the earth. Dying although he be, he courts disease. Death lurks in his path, clad in the livery of heaven, and he stoops to embrace the monster, and dies. Nothing that he meets in all his progress through life is ~~more~~ deceptive and false, than are the sinful pleasures by which Satan wishes to ensure his destruction. The arch-fiend, who knows well with what material he has to deal, has displayed his infernal wisdom in the devices



by which every step of youth is beset. The various amusements of society have been the ruin of thousands, who but for them, might have been upright and respectable. All along the tide of time, are wrecks of characters which have been destroyed by the gilded fascinations of pleasure. And thousands more will be destroyed ere men will open their eyes upon the fearful scenes around them, and arise in all the strength of human nature, to roll back the waves of sorrow. And until this time arrives, these monuments of wrath will stand; like sunken rocks at times concealed from view, they will involve new victims in the snare, and prove the fatal spots where souls are wrecked.

IK *The theatre.* <sup>Read</sup> So much has been said of late upon this source of depraved pleasure, that I need not dwell much upon it. All *good* men have united in its condemnation, and all bad men have joined in its support.

✕ "From first to last it was an evil place,  
And now such scenes are acted there, as made  
The devils blush; and from the neighborhood,  
Angels and holy men, trembling retired." ✕

I do not say that the theatre *cannot* be made a source of innocent amusement; I do not affirm that the drama cannot be made a source of reasonable enjoyment; but I do affirm that it *is* not. Facts which cannot be controverted prove that it has been, and is



now, a source of moral corruption. In every city of our great country the theatre has been an aceldama, and many a father has turned his weeping eyes towards it, as the spot where his child was decoyed into sin, and ruined forever. Says Rev. Mr. East, "I called to see a mother; she was in distress. She not merely wept, but wept aloud. 'O my child!' and she wept again. 'O my child is just committed to prison, and I fear he will never return to his father's house,' and then her tears burst forth, and with all my firmness I could not help weeping with her. I was afraid to ask the cause; I did not need, for she said, 'O that THEATRE! He was a virtuous, kind youth, *till that theatre proved his ruin!*'" Nor is this a solitary case. There are mothers throughout New England who are shedding like tears, over like sorrow. It is the opinion of one of the best, most talented, clergymen of our country; a man of age, observation, and long experience, that more characters are ruined by the theatre, than by any other device of Satan. He says, "I have watched the progress of young men, as they have become the habitual attendants upon the amusements of the stage, and never have I known one to maintain his integrity any length of time." The whole history of theatrical performances, prove that there is about them a corrupting influence, a demoralizing tendency. Exciting and fascinating, they secure a large attend-



ance, and exert a wide influence. The young are dazzled and charmed by the display, and ere they are aware, have ventured too far out upon the sea of indulgence to return. Not many months ago, I visited, at the request of a broken-hearted mother, a young man who was confined in prison. As I entered the cell and introduced myself to him, I saw shame spread over his face, and the blush overcast a countenance from which vice had not as yet removed all trace of beauty. Seating myself by his side, I commenced a kind and cheerful conversation with him. He told me that he had been in that place seven months, and had several more to remain. His heart was bowed with sorrow as he remarked, "that during those seven months, he had heard kind words from only one person — *his mother.*" He described to me the course of crime which had made him an outcast from society. At the age of twenty-two he had a character as fair as ours. His employment was profitable, and he was doing well. But he was induced to attend the theatre. What he saw there pleased him. He went again and again. Soon his income would not support his extravagance. The nightly visit to the play-house must be abandoned, or he must have more money. He endeavored to secure a more lucrative business, but failed. He took upon himself new duties, but the increase of his income was not proportionate to the increase of his expenses. The



gaming-table presented itself, and he became a gambler. From one step to another he advanced in crime. As his heart grew harder, he became bolder in sin, and at length committed the crime for which he was imprisoned. "O," said he to me, with a tone which I never shall forget, "had I known that I should have come to this, I would have as soon jumped into the fires of hell, as gone to the theatre." When I spoke of reformation, he shook his head, and sighed. "This country is no home for a detected thief," he said. Upon looking around his room, I found two books; a Bible which his mother had given him, and which had no appearance of having been read, and the "Wandering Jew," an obscene, disgusting novel. He was a melancholy spectacle of what the theatre can do, and is doing, to transform the fair characters of our young people, and change them from upright members of society to degraded, detected outcasts. Henry Ward Beecher, in his strong, truthful language says, speaking of the theatre, "Here are brilliant bars to teach the young to drink; here are gay companions to undo in half an hour, the scruples formed by an education of years; here are pimps of pleasure to delude the brain with bewildering sophisms of license; here is pleasure, all flushed in its gayest, boldest, most fascinating forms; and few there be who can resist its wiles; and fewer yet, who can yield to them, and escape ruin. If you



would pervert the taste, go to the theatre. If you would imbibe false views, go to the theatre. If you would efface as speedily as possible all qualms of conscience, go to the theatre. If you would put yourself irreconcilably against the spirit of virtue and religion, go to the theatre. If you would be infected with each particular vice in the catalogue of depravity, go to the theatre. (Let parents, who wish to make their children weary of home and quiet domestic enjoyments, take them to the theatre.) If it be desirable for the young to loathe industry and didactic reading, and burn for fiery excitements, and seek them by stealth, or through pilferings if need be, then send them to the theatre."

2. *Dancing*. I am well aware, that there are different grades of vice and depravity connected with this amusement. There are the occasional balls and parties, and the regular weekly, or nightly revel. While of the former we cannot speak in commendation, of the latter we can speak only in terms of entire disapproval. As they are conducted they are sinks of depravity, one of which is sufficient to curse a nation. I am yet to find that there is anything good about them. Contrived for the gratification of the basest passions of the basest classes in society, they become the source of a vast amount of profligacy and debauchery. They neither tend to give relaxation to the exhausted body, nor the care-worn mind ;



they do not implant in the soul one single virtuous sentiment ; they do not strengthen in any mind the virtuous teachings of home, but everywhere are found to be prolific causes of corruption and death. Could all those who are ruined every year in large cities, by this vicious amusement, be brought together, what a spectacle would be presented. Men who are now apologizing for the vice, would stand aghast ; parents who are sending their children to these sinks of corruption would as soon send them into a nest of vipers ; young men who are bartering their souls away for the miserable mirth, would fly from it, as from the door of hell. The broken-down tradesman, the ruined mechanic, the once studious lawyer, would appear before us, limping from the midnight carousal, to bear witness to the damning influence of this school of infamy. Once respected, once prosperous in life, once beating with high hopes ; now tossed by passion, and driven by the storms of vice. Females would come, daughters and sisters, who awhile since, suspicion dare not touch, and on whose cheek the blush of shame had never been seen, now wearing vice like a garment, every feature distorted, every sign of innocence blotted out, every trace of virtue gone. This is no tale of fancy. You have only to look around you to have it painfully confirmed. I knew a family awhile since who were living in the enjoyment of many of life's blessings. The husband and the wife were young,



and when I saw them first, a lovely child was twining its arms around the mother's form. A year rolled away, and there was a change. God in his awful providence had removed the child, and left the parents in sorrow. Home now seemed dreary, and instead of seeking solace in the Saviour, they fled to the dance and the revel. Soon the woe commenced. The mother threw aside her mourning for the gay attire of the ball-room, and each of them began to drink the bitter waters of vice. Affection for each other fled; strife took the place of contentment and quiet; a separation ensued; the husband fled, and the wife, young, interesting and intelligent, has entered upon a course of crime which will end in complete ruin. A happy family has been destroyed, the hearts of friends have been distressed, and the vows of marriage recklessly trampled under foot.

3. *Gambling.* This sort of amusement is generally regarded as a crime. Those who uphold the theatre and the dance, make no plea for this. The law looks upon it as a doubtful employment, and none but those engaged in it, are willing to be its defenders. And yet there are few sources of corruption more fascinating and deceptive. All men want money, and when the prospect of securing a large sum in a single night, is held up before us, the eyes are dazzled and blinded. Compared with a game of chance, the slow process of making a fortune over an



anvil or plough, appears to the young exceedingly difficult, and they are often led to the gaming-table, in order to become rich sooner. Then there is something in gaming, when considered as an amusement merely, which is well-calculated to captivate. The uncertainty, the excitement, the all-absorbing interest, lead the mind astray, and he who becomes addicted to the vice, and learns to love it, will find himself bound in chains stronger than iron. Within the last few years gaming has become exceedingly prevalent; children are gambling in the streets, their sires are gambling in low cellars, while our fashionable young men are pursuing the same employment in gay and gilded saloons. In almost every street your ears are saluted by the sound of the rolling ball, and the clattering dice, and the melancholy evidence of the prevalence of this vice is on every side. And the result will be a community of dishonest men; a vicious, depraved society.

The idea that a man can be honest while he is a confirmed gambler, is absurd. Gambling saps the principle of honesty, and makes a man a villain in a night. The record of this vice is full of cases which are fearfully illustrative of the truth of this position. In a short time a man will learn to cheat his victim without mercy. He will lead him to the bar, and induce him to drink, and when his brain is on fire will lead him back to the board,



and rob him of his all. He may know that he has a starving wife and child at home, but he cares not for that. He may know that the safety of the man's reason, and *life*, and SOUL, may depend on the game, but he cares not. He will cheat him, even if he knows his wife and child will starve, or die broken-hearted; he will play and rifle his pockets, though he may believe all the while, that the poor wretch will be driven to madness, to suicide, to hell. The tender mercy of the confirmed gambler is cruel. Gold is his god, and to secure it, he would barter away the souls of his own children. I know of no vice which so effectively hardens the heart, destroys all tender feeling, and deadens the soul to things which are excellent, as does gambling. The theatre and the dance, destructive as they are, are not to be compared with it in this respect. Dr. Nott says, "The finished gambler has no heart; he would play at his brother's funeral, he would gamble upon his mother's coffin." A fact is related on good authority,\* of gamblers who wished to show their utter contempt for all sacred things, and their entire disregard of all that men deem sacred and divine. After various deeds of folly and madness, which exhibited their recklessness, they entered at night the charnel-house of a cathedral, and took from its resting-place a corpse which had been buried the same day. Up

\* Rev. W. B. Tappan.



through the narrow passage, they bore the person of the dead, uttering low jokes and blasphemous expressions. With their clay-cold load they arrived in the cathedral, passed within the chancel, lighted up one of the candles of the altar, and then placing the corpse in a chair by the communion-table, gathered around it and engaged in a game of chance.

4. *Social drinking.* Intemperance is insidious. It does not come at once with its burning streams to consume the heart of its victim, but slowly and gradually drags itself along, taking one fortress after another, until the fashionable, genteel, moderate drinker has become the reeling, bloated, degraded drunkard. There is something in the idea of taking a social glass with a friend, or drinking a cup of sparkling wine on some public occasion, exceedingly pleasant. The young fail to perceive the danger of the practice. They cannot see how it is, that a man is led on from moderation to brutal excess, and hence use the wine-cup freely, and without fear of any evil consequences. The idea that he shall become a drunkard, does not enter into the mind of the young man when he sips the poison. And thus it has ever been with those who have become intemperate. Not one of all the thousands who have gone down to a drunkard's grave, and have entered upon the scenes of a drunkard's eternity, ever supposed that he should be a beastly, degraded inebriate. Such an end never



presented itself to the mind of any young man, as for the first time he drank his social glass. But step by step, the habit grew upon him; day by day the fatal spell was thrown around him; deeper and deeper he descended into the vortex of wretchedness, until the last lamp which shed its light upon his path was put out, the last star of hope sank in darkness.

I am perhaps addressing those who occasionally make use of intoxicating drinks, and who on social occasions deem it well to take the cup of wine without hesitation. You do not perceive any signs of danger, and should one remonstrate with you personally, you would consider it an insult. "Can I not govern myself?" you would ask with outraged feelings. "Can I not drink when I please, and let it alone when I please?" "Have I no power over my appetite and passions?" The same questions others have asked, and yet been hurried into the whirlpool of drunkenness. Others, when remonstrated with, have been as indignant as yourself, but have ultimately found that the cup was poison, that death lurked beneath its brim, that the deathless worm was coiled up there, that it burned the soul with deathless flame. I have read somewhere of a man who kept a tiger in his house. He had secured the animal when it was quite young, and by kindness and gentleness had apparently subdued its ferocious and bloodthirsty disposition. So attached to his pet did he become, that he took the



creature to bed with him at night, and let it follow him in his travels. Friends remonstrated, and urged the nature of the animal, and predicted danger. The foolish man laughed at their fears, and ridiculed the idea of danger. At length he went to sleep at night as usual with the beast by his side. Turning in his bed he drew his hand across one of the paws of his favorite. The wound streamed with blood. The tiger tasted it. His ferocious nature which had been curbed for years was aroused, and when the morning came, all that remained of his master was a bleeding, mangled corpse. The man who sports with intemperance in any form, who drinks moderately or immoderately is tampering with the tiger. He will realize the truth of Scripture, "at last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder."

5. There are other sources of sinful and dangerous amusement, which I need not mention. If you turn your gaze over the surface of society, you will find abundant evidence upon this subject. Everywhere will meet your eye the crowds of men and women seeking pleasure in paths that lead to death, and on every hand will appear the wrecks of character which strew the tide of time. A few objections to all sinful pleasures, will close this discourse.

1. *They abuse time.* Time was given us for a high purpose. It was designed as a season of probation. In it, man is to fit himself for eternity, and



prepare his soul for a crown in heaven. He has no right to squander it in any of the vain employments which I have this evening enumerated. We are accountable to God, and of nothing will he require a more strict account than of our time. If that is wasted and abused, his most severe judgments will fall upon the guilty head. And what waste of time can be more shameful than that of the dancer, or the stage-player? It is a sad and fearful sight to behold a being created for immortality, having a deathless soul, and soon to stand before God, leaving the purpose for which his Maker has designed him, and spending the time which will soon run out, in capering around a violin until midnight, or watching the grimaces of some ridiculously dressed actor, as he attempts to mimic the poor forlorn objects of human woe. If there is one scene on earth, which is empty, vain, and trifling, it is that which the dancing-hall exhibits. The gambler hopes to gain gold, but dancers can hope for nothing but exhaustion, weariness, and disease. Dressed in gilt and tinsel, looking more like some specimens of the brute creation than human beings, they whirl and tumble about like idiots, or shakers. One grand jumble will not satisfy them, but hour after hour must be spent in the unhealthy, unreasonable, unmeaning service. And how will such give an account of their time to God? Has he given them the precious boon of life for such a purpose? Has he



made man immortal that he might spend thus, his existence upon the earth? Not at all! God had no such design in view, and he must look down upon these sources of depraved pleasure with infinite abhorrence. If the waste of time was the only objection which could be urged against them, it would be enough. It would be sufficient to brand them with divine and human disapprobation. It would be enough to induce every son and daughter of Adam to abjure them as destructive to the best interests of the human family.

2. *They are destructive to health.* This you all know. The man must be insane who denies that drinking and dancing are calculated to sap the energies of the system and destroy life. Were half the vigorous constitutions destroyed by an attendance upon the house of God, that are ruined by the amusements which are spread around us in such profusion, the voice of the whole community would demand that houses of public worship should be abolished. Many individuals are horror struck, if a protracted meeting is held, or, if on the evenings of the week, meetings are prolonged an half hour beyond the usual length. And yet the persons who make such an outcry, see no objection to dancing meetings if they are continued until morning. They are afraid that Christians will suffer, if they sit a single hour in the praying circle, even though they be arrayed in warm,



comfortable clothing, and yet will resort to the dancing hall in the most unbecoming and uncomfortable apparel, and deem it no outrage upon the laws of nature. When this matter shall be seen in its proper light, it will be found that to the sinful amusements, the sexton is to a great extent indebted for his trade; that more lives are lost by them, than by war. There should (if justice had its rule), be a hospital beside every dancing hall, and every tippling shop in our land, and the broken down specimens of humanity who keep these laboratories of death, should behold the destruction which they cause.

3. *They lead to extravagance and prodigality.* The road is not a long one, from affluence to poverty, when vice has become a source of amusement and daily recreation. We have not to travel far to find sad and solemn lessons, teaching the influence of vicious pleasure upon the purse and pocket. Every city has them. They throng the temple of memory. They are living all around us. The great cause why so many young men are obliged to abandon business, and retire from the scenes of youth, is, not because commercial embarrassments have spread over the land, not because business is not profitable, but because vicious pleasure is unprofitable, because a course of vice will swallow up the most lavish income, because the ceaseless cry of these depraved pleasures is like that of the daughter of the leech,



Give, give. To a young man accustomed to find enjoyment in the vicious amusements of the day, there is no end to expenses. They come thicker and faster, like the snow flakes of winter. They multiply and increase every day, and soon the course of folly must be broken up, or the means for continuing these excesses, furnished from some other quarter. Do you ask the cause of so much bankruptcy? Look for a reply to the sinful amusements of our large cities, pursued by their ten thousand votaries. Do you ask the cause of so much moral delinquency? of so much dishonesty? so much forgery, and theft, and wrong? Go, for an answer, to the sin-stained pleasures of the young. Do you ask the cause of extravagance, prodigality, and suffering? Go to the lighted hall, the playhouse, and the gay saloon, and you have the reply.

"Vice drains our cellar dry,  
And keeps our larder clean; puts out our fires,  
And introduces hunger, frost, and woe,  
Where peace and hospitality might reign."

4. *They are unnatural.* Man does not need them. They are perversions of our nature, and produce misery only. They do not bring relaxation and relief, but sorrow and distress. They are wholly unnecessary. God has given us pure pleasures in abundance. He has surrounded us with an endless variety of charms, and made us to enjoy them. The angels might as well descend to earth in the vain hope



of finding more bliss here, than beside the shining throne, as man leave the pure joys and pleasures which God has given, to grasp those which Satan has devised for his destruction. Says an eloquent writer, "Upon this broad earth, perfumed with flowers, scented with odors, brilliant in colors, vocal with echoing and re-echoing melody, I take my stand against all demoralizing pleasure. Is it not enough that our Father's house is so full of dear delights, that we must wander prodigal to the swineherd for husks, and to the slough for drink? When the trees of God's heritage bend over our heads, and solicit our hand to pluck the golden fruitage, must we still go in search of the apples of Sodom—outside fair, and inside ashes? Men will crowd the circus to hear clowns, and see rare feats of horsemanship; but a bird may poise beneath the very sun, or flying downward swoop from the high heavens; then flit with graceful ease, hither and thither, pouring liquid song as if it were a perennial fountain of sound, no man cares for that. Upon the stage of life, the vastest tragedies are performing in every act; nations pitching headlong to their final catastrophe; others, raising their youthful forms to begin the drama of their existence. The world of society is as full of exciting interest, as nature is full of beauty. The great dramatic throng of life is hustling along, the wise, the fool, the clown, the miser, the bereaved, the broken-hearted. Life



mingles before us smiles and tears, sighs and laughter, joy and gloom, as the spring mingles the winter storm and summer sunshine. To this vast theatre which God hath builded, where stranger plays are seen than ever authors writ, man seldom cares to come. When God dramatizes, when nations act, or all human kind conspire to educe the vast catastrophe, men sleep and snore; and let the busy scene go on, unlooked, unthought upon, and turn from all its varied magnificence to hunt out some candle-lighted hole; and gaze at drunken ranters, or cry at the piteous virtue of harlots in distress."

5. *They are heart-corrupting, and soul-destroying.* Were the effects of vicious amusements confined to this life, were the waste of time, the abuse of health, the extravagance and prodigality, all the evil which could flow from them, they might be sought with less guilt than at present. But they have immediate influence upon the soul of man, and are doubtless the cause of the destruction of thousands: The day of judgment will alone reveal the influence of depraved pleasures in peopling that world where no light is, and where the wail of sorrow is ever heard. They contribute essentially to deaden the heart to holy influences, to sear the conscience, and prepare the victim to go out into blackness and darkness. Those who are accustomed to find pleasure in such scenes, are well aware, that they are inconsistent with reli-



gion, and the contemplation of heavenly objects; that they turn the mind away from God, and blind the eyes to all the dangers of the future.

It is a sad sight, to see men so nobly made, with such a lofty destiny before them, with so many high hopes of future good, pursuing the miserable phantoms of this life, and choosing pleasure and sinful mirth, while heaven and immortality should be the objects of their choice. And I presume they will continue in this course of madness until death calls them away to the retributions of eternity. As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the coming of the Son of man. Men will eat and drink, work and play, be sorrowful and merry until the end come, and the wicked shall be destroyed. And I fear that some will be so attached to their pleasures that they will continue to sport with judgment, until the power of vengeance shall burst upon them.

I know not as I can better close this discourse, than by relating an incident which is said to have occurred while the French army occupied the city of Moscow. Of its truth or falsity, I have no means of knowing. A party of officers and soldiers determined to have a military levee, and for this purpose chose the deserted palace of a Russian nobleman, in the vault of which a large quantity of powder had been deposited. That night the city was set on fire. As the sun went down, they began to assemble. The



females who followed the fortunes of the French forces, were decorated for the occasion. The gayest and noblest of the army were there, and merriment reigned over the crowd. During the dance the fire rapidly approached them; they saw it coming, but felt no fear. At length the building next to the one which they occupied was on fire. Coming to the windows, they gazed upon the billows of fire which swept upon their fortress, and then returned to their amusement. Again and again they left their pleasure, to watch the progress of the flames. At length the dance ceased, and the necessity of leaving the scene of merriment became apparent to all. They were enveloped in a flood of fire, and gazed on with deep and awful solemnity. At length the fire communicating to their own building, caused them to prepare for flight, when a brave young officer, named Carnot, waved his jeweled glove above his head, and exclaimed, "One dance more, and defiance to the flame." All caught the enthusiasm of the moment, and, "One dance more, and defiance to the flame," burst from the lips of all. The dance commenced, louder and louder grew the sound of music, and faster and faster fell the pattering footsteps of dancing men and women, when suddenly they heard a cry, "The fire has reached the magazine, fly! fly! for life!" One moment they stood, transfixed with horror; they did not know the magazine was there, and ere they re-



covered from their stupor, the vault exploded; the building was shattered to pieces, and the dancers were hurled into a fearful eternity.

Thus will it be in the final day. Men will be as careless as were those ill-fated revellers. Methinks the hour has come, and I stand upon an eminence from which I behold the vices and amusements of earth. I warn them, and tell them, that in such an hour as they think not, the son of man cometh. With jeering laugh, they ask, "Where is the promise of his coming?" I bid them prepare to meet their God. They reply, "Pleasure is our God." I tell them of an awful judgment; a miserable eternity; and crying "priestcraft," they again engage in the noisy revel. Soon an awful rumbling is heard in the heavens. A thousand voices tell them, that the angels are rolling out the judgment throne. They reply, "One dance more, and defiance to that throne." Suddenly the stars go out, the moon turns to blood, all nature is convulsed, and universal panic seizes the hearts of all men, when, horror struck, I see some Carnot, turn his bloodshot eyes upon the burning world, and waving his jeweled hand above his head, exclaim, "One dance more, and defiance to that flame," and ere that dance is done, the bolt is sped, the magazine of the universe explodes, and *the time to dance is gone, GONE FOREVER, FOREVER.*



## LECTURE VI.

### WEALTH AND FAME.

FOR RICHES ARE NOT FOREVER; AND BOTH THE CROWN EN-  
DURE TO EVERY GENERATION? — *Proverbs 27 : 24.*

FEW men have had a clearer view of the entire emptiness of all worldly good, than the writer of the book of Proverbs. He had measured the world in which he lived, and gauged its depths of happiness. He had ascended the highest pinnacle of human observation, and gazed upon all the pursuits and pleasures of mankind. He had wandered up and down the world, and found in the cottage and the palace, the same unsatisfying and unsubstantial bliss. He had secured riches, honor, friends, and pleasure, but amid them all, he could not forget that he was mortal. Like a wise man, he endeavored to profit by what he learned, and instead of placing his whole dependence on fleeting and transitory possessions, sought by divine aid, the riches of incorruptible and imperishable worth.



The results of his meditations, he has given us in the book which has been so appropriately designated, "The Book of Proverbs." In that book is gathered the full experience of a man who had an intimate acquaintance with human life, and who from the cradle to the grave had studied it; an experience given in a form, at once calculated to attract the attention and benefit the reader; a book of sentences and sentiments, the whole of which constitutes one of the most beautiful systems of moral ethics, which was ever placed in the hands of a young man. The extract from that book which I have read as my text, will be the basis of a lecture this evening upon WEALTH AND FAME.

I would not, of course, be understood to condemn the acquisition of wealth, or the pursuit of fame, altogether. I would not wish to check one laudable desire for the things of life, or quench a single aspiration of the mind for the applause of others. There is nothing wrong in the accumulation of property; there is nothing wrong in a desire to have our deeds approved by our fellow-men. Some of the best and purest men of the world have been men of vast fortunes and unbounded fame, and that man who despises either of them, exhibits his folly. The only caution which the Bible gives, is, that we use them well, and not be inordinately attached to them. It sanctions the pursuit of riches to a proper degree,



and informs us that the *love* of money, and not money itself, is the root of all evil. Placed as we are in this world, it is our *duty* to secure property, if we can by honest and laudable means. God has made our comfort and convenience in this life somewhat dependent on riches. He has surrounded us with wants and wishes which money alone can gratify, and in a hundred ways pointed out to us the propriety of laboring for the useful and necessary means of subsistence. A proper and praiseworthy desire to have a competency is not a sin. It has nothing in it of a miserly character, and has been encouraged and allowed by God in all ages of the world. Those young men, therefore, who are honestly laboring to amass wealth, in hope that it will make them more useful in life, and help them better to benefit man, and glorify God, are doing right, and deserve the encouragement of the wise and good. They only are to be condemned, who are striving to grow rich by dishonest means, or, who after having secured property, use it for their own selfish gratification. I may be mistaken, but I think God looks from heaven with pleasure upon the busy crowds of human life, who are diligent in business, and amassing property that they may spend it in his service. I am well aware that gold has a tendency to corrupt the heart, and as a general thing, a man's soul becomes frozen and deathlike to just the extent of his riches; but this arises wholly from the



fact that money is perverted from its legitimate use, that it is made the occasion of sin, that it is loved more than the Being who gave it. You will therefore remember, as I pass through this lecture, that I condemn only an inordinate desire for riches.

The same remarks may be made of *fame*. Fame is defined to be a favorable report of one's character; praise given to a man because of his real or supposed good deeds. Certainly nothing can be wrong in a desire for this. God has created us with a disposition to please our fellow-men, and receive their approval. And this we find to be one of the ties which bind society together. But for this, man would act without regard to the feelings of his neighbors, and human life would become one wild scene of contention and confusion. The desire to be respected by our fellow men, is a proper desire. It restrains from vice hundreds, who but for this, would rush into sin. It leads to self-respect, and is one of the pillars of human character. Strike it down, and you remove one of the strong inducements to virtue, and leave the young without a motive which now operates in behalf of morality with tremendous force. Instead therefore of checking the desire to please others, it should be encouraged. The young should be taught that self-respect, and the respect of community, are both essential to success in life, and early led by honesty, rectitude, and piety, to gain the confidence and es-



teem of society. But fame is not always pursued for this purpose alone. Like money, it has its worshippers who are determined to secure it, at the hazard of all the other blessings of this life, and the richer blessings of the life to come. With many, fame has changed into a frightful ambition, absorbing all the more lovely and amiable traits of character, and changing man into a blinded, deluded admirer of a phantom which will disappear in an hour.

Thus money and fame, instead of being the blessings which God designed, become sources of iniquity, upon which He must look with peculiar disapprobation and displeasure. You will allow me therefore to offer a few remarks at this time, upon *the folly of an inordinate attachment to wealth and fame.*

1. *They are fluctuating and uncertain.* All who have observed the progress of the world's great changes, must have felt the fearful uncertainty of earthly honors and emoluments. Though all past history has had its changes, and the record of every nation is full of tokens of falling greatness, yet to our times has been left the task of proving most conclusively to the charmed and cheated world, that all earthly honor, and ambition, and riches, are as fluctuating and unstable as the tossed waves of the foaming sea. The last half century has been full of changes, in both private and public life. Single fortunes, and the fortunes of nations, have been gained



and lost. Private individuals and public men have risen to stations of honor and opulence, and fallen as suddenly. The world has been dazzled by meteors, which have flashed athwart the sky, and disappeared, leaving the world in darkness. Perhaps there never has been a time of such political and commercial embarrassment and change. The whole world seems to be resting on the hollow bosom of a volcano. Stability is found nowhere. The church and the state are heaving with internal disorders. Life is convulsed, and the shaking pillars of human society attest the precarious character of all earthly ambition. Similar changes to those which are occurring in great states and nations, are found in every department of life, though on a smaller scale. From the tradesman who acts upon his narrow capital of a few hundred dollars, up through all the ranks of wealth to the man who sports and jests with thousands, and is in earnest only when he deals with millions, there is commotion. From the little province, which has scarcely found a place upon the map, and whose insignificance has denied it a record on the pages of history, up to the great kingdoms whose thrones turn upon the world's centre, and whose political economy is interwoven with the very texture of civilized life, there have been agitating and distressing changes.

Men who a few years ago, were rich and increased in goods, having need of nothing, are now bankrupt;



their fortunes are scattered to the winds of heaven, their rich estates are occupied by others, their proud mansions are inhabited by those who awhile since lived in poverty, and all the tokens of their former wealth are gone. Men who not long ago, heard their names chanted by an admiring crowd of human beings, now hear them pronounced with scorn and derision. Sovereigns who imagined themselves seated securely on their thrones, have been driven into vagabondage, and now are eating the bread of disgrace and poverty. Kings have become slaves, and slaves are changed to kings. The wheel of fortune is turning every hour, and those who are in affluence to-day, know not where they will be to-morrow. To illustrate the point more clearly, I will refer to a few changes which have occurred in France, a nation which at the present time is drawing considerable attention, a nation which has seen as many fearful revolutions as perhaps any other on the globe, and been as often deluged in blood and crime.

A little more than fifty years ago, Louis XVI. was seated firmly upon the throne of that ill-fated kingdom. His reign was a weak, but splendid one. He had assumed the reins of government under favorable auspices, and for awhile was the idol of the people. His court was the centre of beauty, fashion, and splendor, and he rode upon the full tide of popular applause. If we could have looked upon



the monarch then, we should have regarded his case as one of the best specimens of permanent power. He seemed so strongly entrenched in the affections of the people, so honored by the esteem of other nations, so surrounded by servile armies, so favored by the god of wealth, that none would have predicted his sad end. But the wave of popularity which attended him in the early part of his administration, and bore him on to fortune, was deceitful. The voice which shouted his name with rapture, was calling for his blood. Honored as he was, wealthy as he had been, he found but a single step from the monarch's throne to the block of the malefactor; but one step from the emoluments of office, and the kingly prerogatives, to the death of ignominy. The heaving storm of revolution fell not on him alone. His beautiful, accomplished, and high-born queen, Marie-Antoinette, followed him to the scaffold. Bound on a cart, sitting on the coffin which she was soon to fill with her cold corpse, she rode along, the widow of a beheaded king, to her own execution. Crowds of men and women, who had followed her with admiration not long before, lined the streets through which she passed, but offered no assistance, and uttered no sympathy; and when her trunkless head was elevated on a pike before their eyes, they shouted, "The tyrants have fallen."

Scarcely had this wild scene passed away, ere Napoleon Bonaparte emerged from his obscurity, and by



extraordinary energy lifted himself into the affections of the people, and the offices of trust. From one step to another, he ascended, until the imperial crown was placed by his own hands upon his head. Each succeeding month clustered new glory around his administration, and he soon became the master of Europe, the wonder of the world. He made kings, and deposed them. He sported with thrones and states, as a child with the leaves of a broken flower. He had wealth, fame, glory, success, all of them. But alas! earthly greatness is precarious. In one day, the glory of his arms became dim, the lustre of his crown faded, the sceptre fell from his palsied hand, and he fled, an exile and a wanderer to a distant home. How strikingly does his short, eventful life, exhibit the vanity of human ambition. A monarch yesterday; to-day a slave. Yesterday, flushed with conquest, a continent fleeing before him; to-day pining in solitude, and perhaps poisoned by the government into whose hand he had given himself for protection.

Then followed Louis Philippe, the *golden* monarch. He deemed wealth and fame substantial, when founded on standing armies, and on the ignorance of the people. Hence, he suppressed all revolutionary publications, enlarged his standing army, procured a bullet-proof coach, doubled his guard, and made his power appear invincible and his throne impregnable.



But in an hour the tide of change swept them all away. The throne was torn from its place, and burned in the streets of Paris, the sceptre was broken to pieces by an infuriated mob, the signs of royalty were scattered before the wild commotion, and the king and his family fled into exile, without money enough in his purse to purchase a change of garment.

Other nations of the earth, though not so prominent as the one to which I have referred, are all undergoing, more or less, really the same process. Scarcely a throne in Europe is secure, and fame and wealth are found to be as uncertain as the whistling wind. Even ecclesiastical fame, and the revenue which is drawn from extensive church organizations are not sure. We see a potentate, who has claimed to be the "Vicegerent of God," driven from the episcopal palace, and seeking a home in a dishonored and unknown spot.

Nor in our own country, is wealth and fame more certain. Some who live and move among us, clad in rags and poverty, were born heirs of extensive possessions, but those possessions have wasted away. As a general thing a fortune runs itself out, ere it reaches the fourth generation, and often a single lifetime is sufficient to change the pecuniary circumstances of a multitude of men. A single failure will sometimes involve a hundred firms in ruin, and lead down a hundred families to abject poverty. A



single conflagration which sweeps along the crowded streets of a city, consuming property, will often destroy the hard earnings of many years, and leave toiling men to die in sorrow, destitute of enough to purchase a winding-sheet. Human life is one constant scene of migration from affluence to poverty, a shifting panorama of good and evil.

Nor does *fame* in republics, have anything more of stability, than wealth. Each year presents us with new candidates for popular applause, and consigns the favorites of previous years to oblivion. Our political ingratitude is a marked feature of our national history. Men who have toiled long and well, are denounced for some difference in political opinion, and their places in the government and in halls of legislation, filled with those who have no claim to popular favor. And thus it will continue to be, while the human mind remains the same as at present, and he who is dependent upon the mad shout of the populace, which is as unstable as water, will soon find that his station is one of precarious and doubtful character. In the times of Christ, our divine Saviour, he was made the object of ridicule at one time, and of praise at another time. His reputation was tossed upon the wave of inconstant human passion, and his name shouted at one period with rapture, and at another period with derision. He lived, the sport of changing man; he died, the victim of popular indignation.



He heard the shout, "Hosanna, hosanna, to the Son of David;" and the cry, "Crucify him, crucify him," sounded in his ears, as it was echoed out by the same multitude.

Such being the precarious character of wealth and fame, I would suggest that they be not made the chief objects of pursuit. There is a purer wealth, there is a more exalted honor; which cometh down from heaven. While I would urge a proper interest in the acquisition of property and a good character, I would suggest that wealth and honor are needed in the world to come, and if *these* be ours, the failure to secure temporal wealth and applause will be of but little consequence.

2. *They fail to secure permanent happiness.* Long ago it was proved that things external cannot secure permanent peace and pleasure.

"The conscious mind is its own awful world,"

and if this is in commotion, no external circumstances can give it rest. Hence we have found some of our most wealthy men to be the most miserable of all. Surrounded by all the charms of luxury and splendor, having every wish gratified, and every desire fulfilled, they walk on earth the moving monuments of woe. The notion is a false one, that happiness depends upon wealth. It is not true, that our most wealthy men are the most happy. Facts are against it. Riches



must be attended with care and sorrow, and generally, the more wealth a man has, the fewer will be his hours of pleasure. I doubt whether the man who has thousands at command, who is enabled to look abroad upon extensive fields, and watch for returning vessels, is as happy as the day laborer, who owns not the roof which covers him, and who knows not how long he shall have food for his children. The one, has riches and crushing cares; the other, has penury and peace. The one trusts in his laden ship, in the income of his stocks, in the safety of his investments; the other, trusts the God who heareth the young ravens when they cry, and looks for food and raiment to the

“Glorious Giver, who doeth all things well.”

Nor will *fame* secure peace of mind, and give rest to the troubled conscience. Men have tried it, and failed. They have secured the breath of popular applause, they have heard their names mingled with sweet strains of music, but found the heart within, restless and unsatisfied. The highest pinnacle of earthly ambition has been attained, but the “aching void” has not been filled, nor can it be. As well might we attempt to satisfy the desire for food with husks and thorns, as to satisfy the longings of immortality with the transient and unmeaning praises of an excited crowd. It is said of Alexander, that when



he had secured the world's homage, and covered the earth with the fame of his conquests, he sat down and wept, because there were no more kingdoms and states to conquer. He had wealth, fame, glory; but they did not give him happiness. Had he found another world and made himself master of it, he would have been no nearer the point at which he aimed. Other men whose fame has been world-wide, have given unequivocal evidence, that they had no enjoyment in the things around them, and fame and riches instead of being sources of pleasure, have proved to be sources of sorrow and distress. We are sadly deceived in respect to these things. There is a glitter, a splendor, around the rich man's gold; there is a charm to applause and honor, which cheats the blinded throng. The headache and the heart-ache, cometh alike to rich and poor, noble and ignoble. All the gold which can be found in yonder newly discovered mines, cannot drive away the sorrow which unbidden and uncalled, will rush into the temple of the soul. The loudest blast of Fame's burnished trumpet, cannot make melody to a heart oppressed with sorrow, and bowed with guilt. Go ask the Astors, Brookses, Lawrences, and others, who have accumulated large fortunes, and they will tell you, that the mere possession of wealth, is not the prominent source of pleasure, that they were as happy when they were poor men, as when their fortunes had in-



creased to millions. Go ask the proudest military chieftain that ever drew a sword, or put a trumpet to his lips; go ask the man most famed for wisdom, skill, and eloquence, and they will both tell you, that fame is an empty blast, and has no power to satisfy the cravings of a deathless soul. Gather in one spacious apartment all the wealthy ones, and the honored of the earth, and you will find no class of men in the wide world who bear so many marks of care, and wear so many traces of sorrow, as do these favored sons of Adam.

“It is the mind that makes the body rich;  
And as the sun breaks through the darkest clouds,  
So honor peereth in the meanest habit;  
What! is the jay more precious than the lark,  
Because his feathers are more beautiful?  
And is the adder better than the eel,  
Because his painted skin contents the eye.”

Certainly not! Nor is the man of wealth and fame, more truly great, and wise, and happy, because he is more favored than his fellows. Wealth and fame, are often like the feathers of the jay, and the skin of the adder, given irrespective of a man's virtues or vices. The pleasant plumage, does not make the jay sing more sweetly; the painted skin, does not detract from the poisonous nature of the adder. The adder is the adder still, with all his beauty; and the rich man with all his wealth and honor, remains a poor sorrow-



stricken child of earth. Tell me, ye youthful aspirants for gold and silver, ye who are disposed to leave home and friends, and all the endearments of civilized life, tell me, what a fortune is worth, which cannot purchase exemption from a single pain of body, a single sorrow of the heart? Tell me, what the plaudits of the world are worth which cannot ease the guilty conscience, or wipe away one stain of guilt?

3. *Unreasonably loved, they lead to crime.* I have shown that wealth may be acquired, and fame pursued, to a certain extent. Well would it be for man, if he would stop where God has set the bounds, but in many cases he will not. The mind which is bent on fame, will pursue it at the hazard of all that is truly good. This we have seen in all past history. Principle has been sacrificed, true nobility of soul trodden under foot, the rights of man disregarded, the interests of the undying soul placed in jeopardy, that some ambitious tyrant might have his name recorded

“Among the few immortal ones,  
That were not born to die.”

Wealth has been sought at the same sacrifice, and many to gain it, have lost all that is really valuable. Well does the word of God declare, that “The love of money is the root of all evil.” It makes the robber, the gambler, the murderer. It leads to all kinds



of crime and degradation. A "haste to be rich," has filled the world with dishonesty and fraud, and plunged many into eternity, covered with the foulest crimes. Hence, our desires on this point cannot be too carefully controlled. An inordinate desire to secure the applause of the world, will lead to an abandonment of the great principles of right and integrity. Under the present constitution of things, a man cannot be universally popular, without lowering the standard of his character. A *truly* good man, the people are not yet prepared to love. Popular opinion is divided, and the "baser sort" will not honor a man who stands up against their crimes, in the dignity of a pure character. Hence, we find that all good men have their enemies, all virtuous men their opposers. Christ, our great example, was called "Beelzebub," and harsher terms have been applied to the members of his household. Consequently the great temptation to young men is, to relinquish their independence of character, bow to the discordant elements which are around them, and purchase at such a price, the favor of the world. This is especially the case with political men. Communities change so frequently, that our public men are kept turning continually, until we scarcely know where to find a man, who has become deeply entangled in the intricacies of party politics.

In like manner, an absorbing desire for gold, will lead to fatal results. He who is determined to be



rich at any sacrifice, who places wealth before him as the chief aim of his being, will soon cease to hesitate in regard to methods of securing it. If he cannot gain it by lawful industry, he will resort to fraud and deception, crime and woe. A large amount of the dishonesty of the present day, may be traced back to the love of money, and the unscrupulous means taken to secure it. Better be poor, than rich at the sacrifice of honesty. Better toil day and night, and eat the bread of poverty, than have a passion for gold which will corrupt the heart, canker the soul, and lead to the commission of foul and horrid crimes.

“ Oh cursed love of gold; when for thy sake  
The fool throws up his interest in both worlds;  
First starved in this, then damn'd in that to come.”

4. *They are brief as human life.* Were we on a journey through a strange country, and stopping here and there, only for a night, we should deem our accommodations of small importance; we should not think of fitting up in a costly manner, a house in which we should remain but a few hours. Human life is a journey through a strange land. Our home is beyond it, far away. Each object we behold is a monitor, pointing us downward to the grave in which our ashes will soon repose. Is it not vain, then, for us to give our whole attention to wealth and fame? We cannot carry them with us into the grave. The



rich and poor are alike in the coffin, and all the fame of earth will make no difference in the world to which we are hastening. I have read of a man who was rich on earth. He fared sumptuously every day. He was clothed with purple and fine linen. He rode in his chariot. He reveled in wealth and splendor. But death, the common enemy, visited his splendid abode, and hurried him away. He took no gold, no silver, with him. His chariot he left behind. His magnificence, pomp, and distinction, were all of the earth. In that other world, he was miserably poor. He had no home. On the waves of an angry sea his soul was tempest driven. He had no pillow but the wave of fire, and in vain he prayed for a cup of water to cool his parched tongue. I have read of another man, who sat at that same rich man's gate, full of sores, and covered with wounds. He was poor, *very poor*. But in time, he died. Angels caught his spirit, and carried it up to a world of bliss. All was changed. In an hour, he had become wealthy, honored, and supremely blest. There is an anecdote circulating widely in the papers of the day, which although old, so strikingly illustrates the vanity and brevity of wealth and fame, that I will give it in the language of another: "In the middle of the eleventh century, there arose a Mohammedan prince in Egypt, by the name of Saladin. Ascending the throne of



the ancient Pharaohs, and guiding the Moslem armies, he rolled back the tide of European invasion, with which the Crusaders were inundating the holy land. His legislative genius constituted him the glory of his own country, while his military exploits inspired Christendom with the terror of his arms. The wealth of the Orient was in his lap, the fate of millions hung upon his lips, and one half of the world was at his disposal.

“At last death, the common conqueror of all, came to smite the crown from the brow, and to dash the sceptre of this mighty monarch. As he lay upon his dying bed, looking back upon the visions of earthly glory, fast flitting away, and looking forward into the impenetrable future, his soul was overwhelmed with those emotions which must under such circumstances, agitate the bosom of every thinking being. For a long time, his unbroken silence, indicated the deep absorption of his thoughts, by the new subjects which now engrossed his spirit. At last, rousing himself from his reverie, with that firm voice which ever was accustomed to be obeyed, he said: ‘Prepare, and bring me my winding sheet.’ It was immediately done, as commanded, and the winding sheet was unfolded before him. The dying Sultan gazed upon it, long and silently, and then added: ‘Bring here the banner around which my chosen guards have rallied in my victories.’ The banner was presented at the royal couch, and all in silence awaited the



further direction of the monarch. He paused a moment, and said, 'Remove those silken folds, and attach to the staff in their stead, the winding sheet.' It was done with the promptitude with which the orders of the Sultan ever were obeyed. The dimmed eye of the dying monarch gazed upon the mournful emblem of mortality, as it hung from the staff around which he had rallied his legions on the field of blood, and added: "Let the crier, accompanied by the musicians, in a funeral dirge, pass through all the streets of Damascus, and at every corner, wave this banner and proclaim, '*This is all that remains to the mighty Saladin!*'"

"Then was there seen such a procession, as the imperial city had never witnessed before. Gathered in front of the portals of the palace were the musicians, the crier, with the strange banner, and the military escort, doing homage to this memorial of death. Silence pervaded the thronged city as the wailings of the dirge floated mournfully through its long streets. The crowds in silent awe gathered at the corners. Suddenly the dirge dies away, and all is still. The hearts of the people almost cease to beat, as the cold white sheet, soon to enshroud their monarch's limbs, is waved before them. Not a sound disturbs the silent city, as the clear voice of the crier proclaimed, '*This is all that remains to the mighty Saladin!*' Again the soul-moving strains of the re-



quem vibrate through the air, and the procession moves along its melancholy way. As the stars came out at night, the spirit of the monarch took its flight, and the winding sheet enshrouded his limbs, still in death. Seven hundred years since that, have rolled away, and what now remains to the great monarch of the East? Not even a handful of dust can tell us, where was his sepulchre."

Look young friends, over the earth, and witness the pursuits of men. See how they chase the fantom shapes, which the god of this world sends, but to delude and destroy. They strive for fame. They dig for gold. And how long, think you, it will be, ere the *winding sheet* will be all that remains to each of them? Let them fill their coffers, let them secure the applause of the good and bad of earth, let them be all they wish to be, and the common conqueror will spoil the vision in an hour. How wise was that monarch, who employed a page to remind him, at certain hours every day, that he was but a man. Wherever he was, under whatever circumstances, surrounded by his court, in his study, or in the feast-chamber amid the revelers, the page whispered in his master's ear, "*Philip, thou art mortal.*"

Need *we* monitors to remind us of this? We have them. See you, that star, which twinkles and goes out; the sun which shines awhile, and sinks behind the western hills; the leaf which falls when autumn



comes; the shuttle, the cloud, the dew. Daily, hourly, they whisper in our ears, "*Thou art mortal.*" And shall we heed the warning or not? Shall we give to Vanity, or God, our noble powers, our priceless time? Shall we strive to be honored with applause which will die away ere we have crumbled to pieces in the grave? Shall we be rich only in the treasures of one short fleeting life? Shall we be among those who despise honest toil, and imitate the man,

"Who lord of millions, trembles for his store,  
And fears to give a farthing to the poor;  
Proclaims that penury will be his fate,  
And scowling, looks on charity with hate.

No, we have a higher calling. The acquisition of property is not the great end of our being. We have been formed to do good to others, and act a holy part in the reformation of mankind. Around this employment hovers a true dignity, gathers a real splendor. Riches are not forever, and the crown will not endure to all generations, but the glory of doing a kind and lovely act, will follow us beyond the sepulchre; and when wealth has crumbled around our tomb, and fame has died away along the shores of time, the solemn employments of this life will rise up to gladden the heart, and throw a charm over the pages of imperishable memory. Dig not into the bowels of the earth for that which is truly good, but



look upward to thy God! With him all is pure, noble, wise, honorable, while all beneath the skies is vanity. The crown will fall from the monarch's head; the sceptre will drop from his palsied hand; the throne will crumble and decay; wealth will take to itself wings and fly away; all earth's greatness will perish, and the king, the pampered child of opulence, the learned philosopher, the senator, the priest, the gifted and the noble, must seek shelter in a narrow, dark, loathsome sepulchre. Death will stand unappalled before the man at whose word earth turned pale; he cares not for royal forms; he will not be bribed by wealth.

"Earth's highest station ends in 'here he lies,'  
And dust to dust concludes her noblest song."